Khomeini: The Islamic Solution and the Alternative

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Dedication

To my man of the century,
The martyr Imam Hassan al-Banna,
And the revolutionary Imam Ayatollah Khomeini...

Introduction

By the end of 1977, the objective conditions were ripe for revolution locally: massive corruption; Islamically: growing awareness and intellectual and political experience, highly scientific, within the framework of Egyptian Shiite theses — which had moved closer to the Sunni tradition during one of the most intellectually active periods in their history — and internationally: Western dissatisfaction.

Thus came the winter of '78... not completely cold, and spring arrived early in Iran... it was the spring of revolution, subtly and historically advancing in a way never recorded before. The steps were clever, with the black turbans playing a role in a modern consciousness and the beauty of a passionate love... the last quarter of the 20th century, with the role of women in black veils... also played its part.

The world stood stunned as it watched Iranian women descend from the mountains of Qom, Shiraz, and Tabriz to the streets of Tehran, raising their fists against the military, oil companies, and the monopolies of the great powers. The logic of the first Islamic movement appeared once again. Western media and its followers were perplexed, floundering, dipping their pens in the ink of Satan to write about the Ayatollah, who had gathered around him millions of people hungry for freedom and a return to God. Meanwhile, they searched every day for a new excuse for that mad priest, Jim Jones, responsible for the Jonestown massacre in Guyana.

The American computer was incapable of understanding the connection between the martyrdom of Hussein, more than 1,300 years ago, and the fall of a regime that was considered one of the most modern and stable in Western Asia.

- The continuous fear within the minds of the sick and powerful nations, their dominance, violence, and portrayal as a sword raised against Islam and its future—this fear is now crumbling, and those illusions are collapsing. The major powers, like all creatures on Earth, can make mistakes, even with computers!

- Under its shadow, this is the phase of Islam, and this is why the masses have risen. Had it not been for this phase, the people would not have risen for it in this way. All possibilities have fallen before the peoples of the region. Exhausting experiments with liberalism and socialism are now being declared for what they are — their failure and collapse.

- The coming battle will be between Islam and communism. Global capitalism no longer protects anyone. The notions of dilution, hesitation, and standing in the middle no longer create true development, a true people, or true authority. They also no longer protect our looted wealth. A new generation is now emerging in this region, more aware of the realities of things, and it is coming closer to Islam under the shadow of the approaching communist danger. We should not forget the Jewish relationship with the communist

movement, and we should seriously consider the possibility of the Israeli-American alliance transforming into an Israeli-Soviet alliance (especially after the lessons of Vietnam, Formosa, and Iran).

And the last question remains... regarding the possibility that the Islamic movement might not come to power. It will be difficult for us to say at that time that they did not age in the battle; rather, the elimination of the revolution in Iran and elsewhere, by any means, would mean that the Islamic movement worldwide has suffered the harshest blows since 1954. In fact, this blow might be more severe and painful than the one in 1954. However, this will not mean that the Eastern issue has ended. In addition to the new concepts that we have pointed out as emerging, Islam remains capable of mobilizing the masses, re-establishing the realities of power in the world, shifting the status quo, and possibly even seizing power. The most dangerous issue is not only that a cohesive ideological entity is emerging, challenging the series of materialist ideologies presented to humanity, but also that the Islamic world has become strategically and economically more dangerous in a time referred to as the age of economics.

If this happens – God forbid – a Muslim does not know defeat, and we will echo with Imam Khomeini:

“We know that all the political powers in the world want to destroy our movement. But at the same time, we know that our Islamic responsibility and divine rule compel us not to sink into anxiety. We act with the logic of the early days of Islam. If we are killed, we are in paradise; if we are defeated, we are in paradise; and if we deal a blow to the enemies of Islam, we are also in paradise. For this reason, we fear no defeat; we fear nothing. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was defeated in some battles. We fight with the sword of God, and the movement will continue.”

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

"Like those who take protectors other than Allah, [they are] like the spider who takes a home. And indeed, the weakest of homes is the home of the spider, if they only knew."

Allah, the Almighty, has spoken the truth.
(Al-Ankabut 29:41)

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“Indeed, the wheel of Islam is in motion, so turn with Islam wherever it turns. However, the book and authority will part ways. So, be with the book, even though rulers will be appointed over you. If you obey them, they will humiliate you, and if you disobey them, they will kill you.” The companions asked, "What should we do, O Messenger of Allah?" He replied, "Be like the followers of Jesus. They were sawn in half and carried on wood. By Him in Whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, a death in obedience to Allah is better than a life in disobedience to Him."

[Sahih Hadith]
“The spider" (29:41)
True are the words of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him.

The Islamic Movement and the Challenge

1

Has the era of the eunuchs and impotent figures, who surfaced a century ago on the surface of Arab and Islamic time, come to an end?

Has the time ended when one of them would name his son "Laheb" so that people would call him "Abu Lahab" (Father of the Flame)? Has the phase of trials that exhausted our nation and crippled its strength under the supervision of colonialism and in the search for alternatives to Islam come to an end? We sought these alternatives in the thoughts of our enemies...

Has the era of the peoples who were manipulated by the devices and agents to shout against their own interests, their culture, and their true ideology ended? Has the era of the military men who wear the crowns of emperors and the shoes of the masses ended? Has the era of claims and progressive slogans that wasted thousands of kilometers of our land and spirit ended? And has the great Islamic war begun, as expressed by *Le Paris Match* (French magazine) in 1979.

2

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, Egypt was experiencing a tumultuous and violent movement, and the Islamic movement was taking its natural place in leading the masses. Suddenly, Nasser rose to power, taking over the decaying throne. Only a few years passed before the elimination of the national Islamic forces in one of the most brutal purges in modern Islamic history. Despite Nasser's claim of separation, in a conversation with the editor-in-chief of the Lebanese *Hawadith* magazine, he claimed the need for an Islamic cultural revolution and said:

“Whom will I carry out this revolution for... I wish I were one of the religious men!"

However, the war against the ideology of the nation and the only thought capable of mobilizing it in its political and social struggle has continued…

Abdel Nasser passed away, leaving thousands of kilometers in the hands of the enemies of this nation, and leaving Egypt suffering under the weight of deteriorating economic conditions and debts exceeding ten billion dollars.

From Egypt to Algeria, Houari Boumédiène responded to a question about what led him to take action against Ben Bella, the symbol of the revolution. In 1966, he answered: "I only took on the responsibility of leadership after I saw hundreds of thousands of Algerians marching in the funeral of Sheikh Bashir al-Ibrahimi, as if they wanted to declare their rejection of the new direction brought by Ben Bella. People were overwhelmed with nostalgia for the conservative past, seeing what the revolutionary present had done to them."

Yes... like this... but the Algerian reality contradicts Boumediene and presents the other side of the answer. The funeral of Sheikh El-Ibrahimi was an opportunity for the masses to express their anger at the un-Islamic slogans that the Revolution of the Million was beginning to promote. The crowd's turnout that day was a declaration of the determination of a martyr... and of this Muslim people's commitment to their authenticity and heritage. At this point, it was necessary to crush these sentiments, and that's why Boumediene came. He disappeared after thirteen years, leaving Algeria in a spiral of programs that threatened its future with dire consequences, leaving a rich country with its debts rising to 6 billion dollars.

In Sudan, which was the cradle of the great Mahdist revolution, the coup of May 25, 1969, which brought the military to power, marked the beginning of a process to eliminate the Islamic movement in the Nasserist style. However, recent developments have proven that their attempts were in vain.

In Libya, where the Senussi movement, which had taken up the banner of jihad, began to age, and had stood bravely against the civilizational genocide carried out by the Italians against the Muslim people of Libya — it became necessary for the Senussi movement to evolve to accommodate new developments. It was natural for the banner to be handed over to the Islamic movement, which began to play its role among the Muslim masses. Suddenly, Gaddafi rose to power in a new military attempt to abort the winds of change, and to complete the drama, the new leader was proclaimed as the caliph of the Muslims and the guardian of Arab nationalism. Western newspapers were filled with stories and tales of a new "Omar ibn al-Khattab." However, only a few months passed before members of the Islamic movement were thrown into prisons and detention centers. All of this was done in the name of Islam, in the name of laws that would cut off the thief's hand and prohibit alcohol. But one night during the famous Libyan march, an Egyptian youth stood up and, during a conversation between the Libyans and Egyptians, read aloud from a newspaper in his hand an attack on the new Islamic model in Libya. He said: "The Muslim Brotherhood, with their influence in Tripoli, were behind the imposition of zakat, the prohibition of alcohol, and the cutting off of the thief's hand. These laws have proven to be a failure, and the prohibition of alcohol has harmed the Libyan economy, wasted tourism resources, and turned Libya into a theater for smuggling alcohol, pushing Libyans to escape abroad to drink."

"Resorting to the revival of laws that were acceptable a thousand years ago is undoubtedly a sign of backwardness," he said. "The enactment of these laws is meant to destroy unity with Egypt, because no law banning alcohol, nor any law of amputating hands, stoning, or any similar regressive law, could be applied in Egypt..." When the young man finished reading the article, one of the Libyan members commented: "This is the talk of those who are enemies of unity and Islam."

Here, the young Egyptian made his surprise revelation: This is the literal text of the article written by an Arab journalist, for whom Libya purchased the rights to a newspaper to express the Libyan revolution!

And so things went on until the time came when Gaddafi, after years, launched his attack on the Muhammadan Sunnah, and discovered, after fourteen centuries, that the Qur'an does not address the issues by which we govern society (as he put it). Even the punishments in this world are limited to three or four! He did not talk about Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who said about Islam: "It is the rules and theories of an Arab Sheikh." It is no coincidence that he became the idol of the military across the Islamic world, from Colonel Reza Pahlavi, the Shah's father, to Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, who spoke about Atatürk (on July 3, 1978, at the conclusion of a religious ceremony held by the Qur'an radio to mark the completion of the 100th recitation of the Qur'an). The Colonel said: "When Atatürk came and said: 'Separate religion from the state'... He was a Muslim, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and he never said that Turkey should become an atheist state... He said Turkey is an Islamic state and will remain Islamic... But he said, I have one request: I want to separate religion from the state. How? The state becomes secular... It deals with its political and economic problems according to the times. As for religion, we let each person practice their faith... perform the pilgrimage, give alms, pray in the mosque, build a mosque. Then came the extremists, who called themselves scholars, and said this is impossible, this is blasphemy. I said to them, I am going to the peak of disbelief, bring the sword, and announce atheism. Atatürk is a victim, I say this to history, he is a victim because the ignorant, naive extremists are the ones who forced him into disbelief."

Likewise, if someone comes and tells me that the Green Book is against religion, I would deal with him like Atatürk, for example.

In Pakistan and Indonesia, the military would appear whenever the Islamic masses were about to take control of their affairs. In Syria and Iraq, under the shadow of the Ba'athist military, the prisons of both countries are still filled with Muslims in desperate attempts to isolate the Islamic movement from its people. But how did this military tide begin?!

3

Colonialism, through all its crusading battles, realized how deeply the doctrine of Islam was ingrained in the hearts of its followers and how Muslims across the world rallied around the banner of the Quran. It also recognized the strength of the Islamic political system, which was embodied in the Ottoman Empire in the later centuries. The colonial powers also understood that they could not confront this unity, this current of belief, which declared that Muslims had no nationality except their religion. They realized they could not oppose it with soldiers or resistance. Even Napoleon, when he entered Egypt at the end of the 18th century, prepared a proclamation for the Egyptians, saying: "In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful… There is no god but God, who has no son and no partner in His sovereignty." From the French perspective, based on freedom and equality, the great army commander Napoleon Bonaparte made it known to all the people of Egypt that for a long time, the pashas ruling Egypt had dealt with the French community with humiliation and contempt, and had wronged their merchants with various abuses. But now the time had come for their punishment. We have waited for a long time, and this

group of Mamluks from the regions of Abaza and the Jiraksah, who corrupt the best of the land, which has no equal anywhere on Earth, has met its end. As for the Lord of the Worlds, who is capable of everything, He has decreed the end of their state.

"O Egyptians, it has been said to you that I came here with the intent of abolishing your religion, but that is a blatant lie, so do not believe it. Tell those who slander that I have come only to rescue your rights from the hands of the oppressors, and that I, more than the Mamluks, worship Allah, the Almighty, and respect His Prophet and the Holy Qur'an. O scholars, judges, clerics, imams, and dignitaries of the land, tell your people that the French are also sincere Muslims. (In the French text: we are the true friends of Muslims) And the proof of this is that they have landed in Greater Rome and destroyed the Pope's throne, who had always urged Christians to fight Islam. They then captured the island of Malta and expelled the knights who claimed that Allah Almighty commanded them to fight Muslims. Nevertheless, the French at all times have been devoted to the Ottoman Sultan, and enemies of his enemies. May his reign be prolonged! However, the Mamluks refused to obey the Sultan and did not comply with his orders."

At the end of the statement: "It is the duty of the sheikhs, scholars, judges, and imams to remain committed to their duties, and each person in the towns should stay in their homes in peace. Also, prayers should continue in the mosques as usual. All Egyptians should thank Allah Almighty for the end of the Mamluk state, saying loudly: 'May Allah prolong the honor of the Ottoman Sultan, may Allah prolong the honor of the French soldiers...'"

But the French campaign in particular is the stage at which we can begin to chronicle the process of proposing alternatives to Islam in the region.

The French Revolution at that time was dismantling the monarchy and spreading its new slogans of liberty and equality to conquer the world! Egypt was tested due to its geographical and political importance in the region. Following the French campaign and the rise of Muhammad Ali, missions began leaving Egypt for Europe to acquire knowledge and education. During that time and afterward, and still to this day, there has been a strong confusion between the values of heritage—those inspiring and capable of mobilizing the nation—and the values of knowledge related to the natural sciences and technological advancement. These are things we should learn and participate in developing, but not as an alternative ideology, as suggested by some who went to Europe, were dazzled by the cleanliness of the streets in London and Paris, and believed that Western technology could only be absorbed with Western-style institutions and buildings, advocating for liberalism as an ideology!

The process of proposing alternatives and questioning the Islamic ideology and its ability to continue and preserve the nation was the focus of the conflict that began in the nineteenth century and continues until now. This was a prelude to changing the political situation that necessitated the Muslim masses' connection to the symbol of their unity represented by the Ottoman state. This attempt did not pass easily, as the masses stood up to it under the leadership of Muslim scholars, thinkers and revolutionaries. They stood

in its way. This is Arabi rebelling against the corruption of the government in Egypt and against the British without it occurring to him to renounce the obedience of the Caliph or rebel against him. He presented his steps to him, deriving authority from him in everything he did, as his memoirs narrate.

Imam Muhammad Abduh says during his stay in Beirut in 1886: “Preserving the Ottoman Empire is the third of the beliefs after faith in God and His Messenger, for it alone preserves the sovereignty of religion and ensures its continuity. There is no authority for religion outside of it, and I hold this belief, praise be to God. We live by it, and we die by it.”

And here he affirms in a conversation with Rashid Rida after the Turkish victory in the Greek War of 1897: “Many of the notables in Egypt dislike the Ottoman state and criticize it, although most of them love it. I too dislike the Sultan, but there is no Muslim who wishes harm to the state, for it is a protective shield in general. If it falls, we, the Muslims, will be like the Jews, or even worse than them. The Jews have something they protect, which preserves their interests and unity: money. But we have nothing left; we have lost everything.”

This is Mustafa Kamel, one of the leaders of the nationalist movement in Egypt, who says in a speech in 1900 that religion and nationalism are inseparable twins. He responds to a question from Prince (Lai Parnge), the brother of Cromer, about his nationality by saying: "I am Egyptian Ottoman." However, the process of forcing Muslims to abandon Islam as an ideology and the Ottoman Empire as a symbol of Islamic unity continued fiercely. One of France's writers believes that the solution to the Islamic question is only through the eradication of Muslims and the exhumation of the Prophet's tomb, transferring his bones to the Louvre Museum in Paris.

This is what Gladstone, the leader of the British Liberal Party, declares: He will not approve any decision for the English in Egypt unless they burn the Quran in the hearts of the Egyptians. He refers to Sultan Abdul Hamid once as 'the enemy of Christ' and at another time as ‘the devil.’ The British (Blunt) states in his book *The Future of Islam*:

“The collapse of the Ottoman Empire does not harm the Muslims; in fact, this Ottoman contract will be scattered to return as a better and more beautiful Arab contract.” In Blunt's final statement, there is a clear indication that colonialism was behind promoting Arabism as an alternative to Islam, as a less dangerous temporary solution for colonial powers. This proposition also attacks the idea of Islamic unity and undermines the Ottoman state under the guise of Arabism, to make it easier for them to divide the region among themselves. Additionally, this proposal would confine the Arab movement to Asia, because it was not easy to separate Arabism from Islam in Arab Africa.

To implement this plan, colonialism began training its students by sending them on missions to Europe or through missionary work, schools, and newspapers that they financed and overseen by their agents.

This activity and the colonial expansion culminated in the Great Arab Revolt, which was planned and executed by the British in the presence of those they had molded. The fear of the threat of Islamic revival and revolution continued to haunt and terrify them, as it remained central in their plans and calculations. Despite all their efforts, the masses and Islamic movements remained the focal point of attraction in the region, with their heroic stances against colonialism, whether before or after the fall of the Caliphate. This started with the Islamic Mahdist movement in Sudan, which, had it survived, would have changed the face of Africa and the Arab East, and culminated in the recent Iranian revolution under the leadership of the Islamic leader Ayatollah Khomeini, passing through the revolutionary leader Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, who stood firm against colonialism, chased it everywhere, and was a spiritual father to many thinkers, preachers, and Islamic movements.

Similarly, the ongoing Islamic revolutions in Algeria, led by Abdelkader El Djezairi, Ibn Badis, and the Association of Ulama, made the Algerian national charter— a secular charter— acknowledge their important role, considering that Islam was the stronghold that enabled the Algerians to withstand all attempts to undermine their identity. The Algerian people fortified themselves with Islam, the religion of struggle, discipline, justice, and equality, and sought refuge in it during the darkest periods of colonial domination. From it, they drew the moral energy and spiritual strength that prevented them from surrendering to despair and provided them with the means to achieve victory.

In Morocco, the Mujahid Abdelkrim El Khattabi, who defeated the Spanish armies and faced a massive French army that included both the navy and air force, fought on a battlefront that extended 450 miles.

In Libya, the Senussi movement and the fighter Omar Mukhtar played an important role in resisting the Italians, who brought nearly one hundred thousand soldiers to annihilate the Muslim Libyan people.

In Palestine, Sheikh Izz al-Din al-Qassam, who was a student of Sheikh Muhammad Abduh, led a revolution against the British until he was martyred. The resistance continued uninterrupted after his death. In 1948, the Muslim Brotherhood fought a heroic battle that astonished everyone and revealed the danger of this devout group to the interests of colonialism and Zionism.

However, colonialism tried to isolate all these revolutions and Islamic movements, and led, with its allies and followers of the Westernization movement, a counter campaign. It was initiated by Farah Antun with his book on Ibn Rushd and his philosophy (1902), a book that was a distorted version of the French thinker Ernest Renan's book *Ibn Rushd and Averroism* (1852). He was followed by Ali Abdel Raziq, who, in his book Islam and the Foundations of Governance, called for the separation of religion from the state, following the example of Europeans. He overlooked or ignored the fact that the conflict that occurred in Europe was rejected and illogical to occur in our Islamic society for many reasons that cannot be discussed here. However, it is enough to point out that the conflict between the Church, which embodied the Christian perspective of renouncing worldly life

and the pursuit of wealth, and the rising bourgeoisie could not have happened here. Islam, in addition to providing a more comprehensive system for all aspects of human life, did not ask its followers to do anything except to be more effective in the worldly domain, which would satisfy desires and fulfill the ambitions of any rising, active force.

Then there was Ahmed Lutfi al-Sayed, who called for the "naturalization" of foreigners in Egypt at a time when they almost completely controlled the economic life, as if he were calling for this economic influence to extend into political life. And there was Taha Hussein, who, in his book *The Future of Culture*, called for the melting of the Egyptian nation into European civilization—"its good and its bad, its sweetness and its bitterness, what is loved and what is hated," as he expressed it. Finally, there was Louis Awad, who, in the *Ahram* newspaper on April 7, 1978, criticized us for teaching our children the history of Tariq, the Pioneers of Islam, and Salah ad-Din more than we taught them the history of Ali Bek al-Kabir, Muhammad Ali, and Khedive Ismail.

While these liberal ideas were making their way through intellectual and literary circles, the other side of the coin was the rise of liberal regimes to power as the first organized alternative to Islam. However, these regimes, which had adopted only the form of Western liberalism—seemingly the only thing they could manage—quickly declared their inability to continue their claims of preserving the nation and supporting its national progress. The defeat of 1948 came to announce:

1) The lack of awareness by the liberal regimes of the nature of the conflict.

2) Its inability to confront the enemy to the end.

3) Its real failure to achieve modernization within the framework of national independence, in addition to its lack of authenticity and its foreignness to Islamic society.

4) However, the currents of secularism and Westernization did not despair after the defeat of liberalism and tried to save themselves, cutting off the path to the Islamic solution that had emerged on the horizon. Thus, the phenomenon of military coups appeared, with the involvement of American intelligence agencies playing a key role, and the so-called revolutionary socialisms began to take their place as a new alternative. While the liberal regimes played their role by placing obstacles in the way of the Islamic movement and attempting to weaken it through invasion and intellectual oppression at times, and political isolation at other times, the socialist military regimes played their role through the physical elimination of the Islamic movement, in addition to intellectual oppression and political isolation. The socialists and anarchists treated the Islamic movement as political opponents (and often much worse), not as ideological opponents, because—among other reasons—they understood that the second face of the battle meant the fall of the masks. We are not here to evaluate the socialist experience, which was quickly

exposed by the defeat of 1967, a defeat that announced what had already been declared by the defeat of 1948 in the great confrontation between the Arab and Islamic nations and neo-colonialism and Zionism in the 10th Crusade, which began in 1948 and whose fires are still raging.

Although the death certificate has been signed for the socialist military, or diversionary, or anarchist regimes (call them what you will), just as it was for their other counterpart in the current of "liberalism"—despite the death certificate being signed—it seems that the burial has not yet taken place. There is a desperate attempt to revive the corpses whose stench has filled the air. Just as history proceeded with the Shah, who, as one of the bastions of liberalism, tried to resist burial, it will proceed with the others. The time will come when the period will end in which a magazine like *Army of the People* (Syrian) publishes an article declaring the death of God (*Exalted is He above what they say*), just before the Israeli attack on the Golan. The time will also end when the struggle against Zionism involves an Arab fighter from a revolutionary organization whose Muslim youth martyr themselves every day, while he writes to us about the torment of Iblis in the Quran (Sadeq Jalal al-Azm in *Critique of Religious Thought*). Likewise, the voices of such discord, like that which appeared on the sixth anniversary of the 1967 Nakba (perhaps by chance, from the Iraqi Marxist publisher Dar al-Awda) in *Religion and Heritage,* will vanish. It shamelessly declared, "Fundamentally, there is no contradiction between Islam and colonialism, for colonialism does not fight religions because they do not fight it, and Islam, as a creed, has nothing to do with colonialism." It then cries out again, "Revolutionary ideology, in its essence, contradicts religion, and religion has no role to play in our current struggle against colonialism and imperialism."

Has this (fighter) read the history of his security! Or is he, as a Tory fighter, not allowed to look back? If so, then in our current struggle against colonialism and imperialism...

A clash with the Islamic Movement and Revolution

At a time when the modern Western challenge was penetrating the borders of our countries, attempting to remove Islamic ideology from leadership and proposing its alternatives, the Islamic movement emerged as a natural reaction to this invasion and the fall of the Caliphate. Its emergence in the 1920s as an active social current in the Islamic community had a significant impact. Serious steps were taken on the path of Islamic revival to restore the Muslim nation to existence and international influence once again.

The Islamic movement, which emerged from the midst of and with the support of the popular masses, grew in a way that amazed observers, confirming what was stated in the book *Whither Islam,* a group of Orientalists, under the supervision of the British Foreign Office advisor H. A. Jebb, stated that “Islamic movements maneuver with astonishing speed, which is truly surprising. They explode suddenly, and before observers can discern the signs that might lead them to question their intentions, Islamic movements

lack only the presence of leadership... they are only missing the emergence of a figure like Salah ad-Din.”

The movement, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, for example, was able to become the largest popular gathering. It reached the villages and cities of Egypt, entered the army and universities. The secret to this mass mobilization, according to an Egyptian Marxist—who wrote an unneutral or objective introduction analyzing Richard Mitchell's book on the Muslim Brotherhood—was that "they launched from an ideology capable of attracting the broadest masses." He continued, "They proved their skill in a well-organized, strong, and effective structure, to the extent that they took one of the most important classic slogans of their traditional opponents—the Communists—the slogan of the ironclad organization, and applied it, while it remained just a slogan for others."

The Islamic revolution in its resurgence sought to unite the Muslim with his identity and ideology, rejecting the prevailing ignorance and the tyrants who created contradictions and crises in the life of the individual and the Islamic community. The latter holds an ideology while facing a reality that is completely different—the reality of injustice, inequality, and the transformative process that will bring about unity, which is organized into two dimensions that are two sides of the same coin. The Islamic ideology, as a divine, realistic, ethical, positive, and global approach, includes solutions to all the problems of contemporary society. However, these solutions will remain mere chatter of intellectuals, discussed in moments of exhilaration, unless they are armed by the masses, who must move to apply them, struggle for them, and engage in political conflicts to achieve them. Some may imagine, as the Shah of Iran and others did, that these problems in Islamic society can be solved simply by achieving the objective conditions for their resolution, or even just some of them (such as money and Arab technology), without considering the subjective conditions. These conditions are what the Islamic vision sees as necessary for the realization of renaissance, and in their understanding lies the other wing, alongside the objective conditions. The subjective condition we refer to here, which must be achieved, is the mobilization of the masses in any battle — whether development struggles or military jihad. This will only be realized through the Islamic revival of the nation, shaking off the dust of Westernization currents, and eliminating the phenomena of duality, fabrication, and disintegration.

Here, the face of this challenge emerges,, which is how to revolutionarily formulate Islamic thought— a formulation through which the Islamic movement can establish strong bridges with the Muslim masses, so that these masses understand the meaning of their connection to the Islamic movement and the role of this connection in preserving their history, heritage, and interests. As a result, the Islamic body becomes a unified whole, where if one part complains, the rest of the body responds with sleeplessness and fever, as the great Prophet, peace be upon him, told us.

The process of formulation, which it seems the Islamic movement in Iran has succeeded in, as will be shown in the next chapter and the subsequent chapters, requires relying on internal dialogue and criticism—self-criticism as a first step on the path. This dialogue, which has perhaps been hindered so far by the extreme sensitivity of the Islamic

movement towards criticism, may have its secret in the fact that the falsehoods and lies spread about it were too great to endure without a response. In fact, they were so widespread that they were sufficient to isolate this movement from the Muslim masses, especially as two important conditions were present for this atmosphere of lies:

1) The absence of the Islamic movement from the scene and its forced silence due to the process of arrests and purges.

2) The loss of the Arab and Muslim mind in a stage of multiple colors, camouflage, and terror directed at the critical sense is a deficiency that struck the social consciousness of the nation at its core, hindering the ability to see the truth, even if only temporarily. Perhaps one of the cheapest and most malicious of these lies was fabricated by Rifaat El-Sayed in his book about Imam Hassan al-Banna (Madbouly Library, 1977), which he dedicated to anyone working for a new enlightenment era for Egypt, protecting it from the invasions of the new Tatars. He fabricated a statement attributed to the martyr Imam, regarding the issue of Shura (consultation), and pointedly mentioned that what he quoted is found in "Our Problems in Light of the Islamic System" (p. 60). Refer to page 92 of El-Sayed's book and compare it with Al-Banna's message to understand what kind of enlightenment they are calling for and who the new Tatars are. Despite this, I repeat that this sensitivity should not hinder the primary and essential demand within the movement, which is internal dialogue and self-criticism. This will undoubtedly lead to the preparation of an atmosphere for presenting scientific, analytical studies of the reality the movement came to change. It will also achieve another necessary demand, which is to create an Islamic vision of the main problems in the Muslim world, their nature, and priorities. A unified program of action will begin with determining the starting points and means, understanding the dialectical relationship between them, and then identifying the movement's ultimate and immediate goals, both direct and indirect.

Chapter Two

Imam Khomeini: The Thinker and Revolutionary

In an upcoming chapter, we will discuss the origins of Shiite thought and how it emerged. We will also address the Islamic movement organizations in Iran and their role in another chapter. However, in this chapter, we will present the thought of the Islamic movement through the ideas of its leader, Imam Ayatollah Khomeini, a leader whose name began to echo in the ears of Muslims and the world since the early 1960s as a symbol, inspiration, and leader of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, which became a great and unique model in the history of human revolutions. From the beginning of his life, Imam Khomeini was a student with vast ambitions for knowledge, distinguished by piety, godliness, and asceticism. He began to emerge in public circles in the 1940s through teaching sessions at the Fayziya School in the city of Qom, where thousands of students gathered around him. He did not engage in making them into dervishes or followers, but rather prepared them as the base for protest and revolution.

During the oil crisis and the government of Mossadegh (1951), Imam Khomeini was close to the great Islamic leader Ayatollah Kashani. Ayatollah Kashani was the man whose voice resonated throughout the world, saying, "O English dogs, leave our oil and get out of our country!" He was the spiritual pillar of Rashid Ali al-Kilani's revolution in Iraq in 1941, and along with al-Kilani and Haj Amin al-Husseini, the Mufti of Palestine, they formed a trio that governed Baghdad at that time. When the revolution failed, al-Kilani and al-Husseini accompanied him to Iran.

The strength of the man was such that when the Muslim martyr Khalil Tahmasebi, a member of the "Fedayeen Islam" organization, assassinated Iranian Prime Minister Razmara, Ayatollah Kashani issued a statement saying, "The bullets that killed Razmara were blessed bullets, accompanied by the grace of God." He then sent an intense message to the Shah, in which he said:

"He is Al-Azir
O son of Pahlavi

You must apologize to Khalil Tahmasbi for the trouble he has suffered as a result of his arrest and you must release him with honor and dignity before three days have passed, otherwise all those responsible for his arrest will be subjected to the same punishment that (Barzm Arah) was subjected to. You must release our holy man within these three days. If you do not do this, you are approaching hell step by step."

Kashani is the one who stood behind Mossadegh, supporting him until he reached power. There is the story of the massive demonstration he led in Iran when Ayatollah Kashani's house was surrounded by a fence of security personnel to prevent him from organizing the demonstration, which would support Mossadegh. On that day, Ayatollah Kashani looked at his son, Sayyid Mohammad Kashani, and said: "Bring me the shroud." They brought him the cloth that had been prepared for his shroud, and he wrapped himself in it. Then, he moved among his followers outside the house, which was surrounded by armed security forces. Everyone stood frozen in awe, staring at the shroud, which was moving on two feet. The security men forgot their duty in the face of the grandeur and

majesty of Ayatollah Kashani's presence. The news spread throughout Tehran, and the largest popular demonstration in Iran's history up to that time took place.

Before we return to Imam Khomeini, we refer to what the American writer Robert Jackson mentioned in his book about Hassan al-Banna: "Had this man (Imam Banna) lived longer, much could have been achieved for this country, especially if Hassan al-Banna and Ayatollah Kashani, the Iranian leader, had agreed to eliminate the divisions between Shiites and Sunnis. The two men met in the Hejaz in 1948, and it seems they reached a mutual understanding and came to a key point, had it not been for the assassination of Hassan al-Banna." This reference highlights the importance and danger of such a rapprochement between Kashani and Banna in the past, and the need for similar rapprochement between Khomeini and other Islamic movements in the world today. One of Imam Banna's followers comments on Jackson's statement, saying: "What would have happened if he had realized his role more closely in this area (the rapprochement), which is too broad to mention in this context."

Imam Khomeini, from his position as a follower of Ayatollah Kashani, closely observed and participated in all the important events, preparing himself for the forthcoming historical missions. When the Shah of Iran announced the "White Revolution," Imam Khomeini strongly and actively opposed the Shah, exposing the falseness of this revolution. He was driven by his belief that the Iranian government was fundamentally tied to colonialism and was subordinate to it, and thus its actions were dictated by the orders and directives of colonial powers. At that time, he led a popular uprising in which the Muslim people sacrificed thousands of martyrs, who were martyred by the Shah's bullets. The Shah met with Khomeini during this time, and Khomeini spoke harshly to him, words that the Shah's pride could not bear. The Shah angrily left and ordered his security chief to take Imam Khomeini to Turkey, where he stayed for about a year before moving to Najaf, Iraq, on June 5-6, 1963.

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The Shiite public and scholars consider that their supreme leadership is divided between Imam Ayatollah Khomeini, who is followed by the majority of Shia Muslims in Iran, Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan, and the religious authority, Ayatollah Abu al-Qasim al-Khoei, who resides in Iraq. Imam Khomeini represents the dynamic movement that seeks to revive Islam as an ideology that addresses all aspects of life through the establishment of an Islamic government, while Ayatollah al-Khoei represents a traditional direction that seeks to avoid political conflicts.

Imam Khomeini's understanding of Islam is based on its comprehensive, revolutionary meaning: "Islam is the religion of the fighters who seek truth and justice, the religion of those who demand freedom and independence, and who do not want to allow the unbelievers any power over the believers" (Islamic Government, 1389 AH, p. 8). He criticizes the view that colonialism attempted to impose on our countries during the intellectual and military invasion, a view which claimed that Islam has no relation to organizing life and society, and that it is only concerned with issues like menstruation and

childbirth. It may have ethical teachings, but it has nothing to say about the affairs of life and the organization of society. He believes this view emerged through colonial activity over the past three centuries, because the greatest obstacle to their goals and the plans of their political schemes is Islam, with its rulings and doctrines, and the faith that people have in it.

He harshly and mockingly criticizes those he calls "the pretenders to sanctity," referring to the clergy who depict Islam as a purely spiritual system with no connection to politics or social affairs. He calls for them to be regarded as enemies from within, saying: "These people do not care about what is happening and they block true scholars from assuming power and taking control of affairs. They deal the biggest blow to Islam" (Islamic Government, p. 140). He demands the purification of religious centers from the "jurists and preachers of the rulers," as he calls them, rejecting them by saying: "These are not scholars... Some of them have been dressed by the security and intelligence agencies in turbans to pray for the ruler and invoke blessings and mercy upon him." He continues: "These people must be exposed because they are enemies of Islam. Society must reject them, for in rejecting and despising them lies victory for Islam and the Muslim cause. Our youth and our children must remove their turbans from their heads... I do not say kill them... At the very least, their turbans should be taken from them" (Islamic Government, p. 143).

As he stated in a statement issued on the 21st of Sha'ban last year: "The respected Imams of the congregational prayers must call upon the preachers who are faithful, committed to the Islamic movement, and have noble goals, to take responsibility for educating the people. They must strongly avoid the invitation of the 'preachers of the rulers' and those who protect the interests of the regime, whether knowingly or unknowingly, by selecting topics that distract the people from the major contemporary issues."

Imam Ayatollah Khomeini takes a firm Islamic and revolutionary stance when he opposes some Shiites who sit idly waiting for the Mahdi to establish Islamic rule and fill the earth with justice after it has been filled with oppression and injustice. Some of them claim that sins should be spread in order for the Mahdi to appear, meaning that if immorality does not spread, the Mahdi will not come. He responds to these individuals, saying: "It has been over a thousand years since the major occultation of our Imam Mahdi, and it may take thousands of years before it is necessary for the Imam's return. During this long period, should the rulings of Islam be suspended? Should people do whatever they want in the meantime? Wouldn’t that lead to chaos and disorder? The laws proclaimed by the Prophet of Islam, peace be upon him, and which he strived to spread, clarify, and implement over twenty-three years, were they meant for a limited time? Did God set a lifespan for the Sharia, such as two hundred years? Should Islam lose everything after the minor occultation? In my opinion, following this view is worse than believing that Islam has been abrogated."

No one who believes in God and the Day of Judgment can say that it is not necessary to defend the borders of the homeland, or that it is permissible to abstain from

paying zakat, khums, or other religious dues, or claim that the penal law in Islam should be suspended — and that the implementation of retribution and blood money should be frozen. Therefore, anyone who advocates the opinion that forming an Islamic government is unnecessary is essentially denying the necessity of implementing Islamic rulings, calling for their suspension and freezing. In doing so, they are denying the universality and eternity of the true Islamic religion. (p. 26 of the previous reference).

Imam Khomeini goes beyond many Shia interpretations of the concept of Imamate, considering that knowledge of law and justice are the most important pillars of Imamate. He says: "The Shi'a have always known who is fit to lead the people, from the time of the Prophet's death until the time of the occultation. To them, the Imam is someone who is virtuous, knowledgeable in the laws and rulings, and just in their enforcement, and he is not swayed by any reproach for the sake of God" (p. 47). He also says: "The caliph is not just a messenger of laws or a legislator; rather, the caliph is intended for implementation" (p. 19). On the unity of Muslims, Imam Khomeini emphasizes the necessity of unity in the Islamic world, which colonialism had divided and transformed into separate nations. He views the Ottoman Empire as a unified state that was fought by colonial powers: "When the Ottoman state appeared as a unified entity, the colonizers sought to dismantle it. The Russians, the English, and their allies allied against the Ottomans, fought them, and then divided the spoils, as you know." While he criticizes many of the Ottoman rulers, he believes that colonialism feared the rise of reformists to positions of leadership, as it would shatter their hopes and dreams: "For this reason, as soon as World War I ended, they divided the land into many small states and placed an agent in charge of each one" (pp. 34, 35).

This situation reminds us of the stance of Shiite scholars who issued a fatwa obligating every Muslim, male and female, to engage in jihad in defense of the Ottoman state when the British forces entered Basra in Iraq. Imam Khomeini believes that the way to unite the ummah is by overthrowing the puppet governments (those under colonial influence). "Then the pursuit of establishing our Islamic government will be crowned with success when it manages to crush the heads of treason and destroy the human idols and tyrants who spread oppression and corruption on Earth" (p. 35). The Imam elaborates on the necessity of forming a government based on the Quran and Sunnah, concluding that it is forbidden to refer to unjust rulers, as he calls them. When discussing the Islamic government, he sees it as different from the known forms of government because it is not absolute; the head of state cannot impose their opinion, but it is constitutional—though not in the conventional sense of a parliamentary system or popular councils. Rather, it means restricting those in power with a set of conditions and rules outlined in the Quran and Sunnah, even though the representatives of the people and the king are the ones who legislate and organize.

"Constitutionality" in Islam means that legislative authority is solely with Allah, and no one has the right to legislate or rule based on anything that Allah has not decreed. For this reason, Islam replaced the legislative council with another council for planning (p. 42). The Islamic government is a government of law, where the ruler is only Allah. It is neither a monarchy, nor a shahdom, nor an empire that indulges in extravagance and

luxury. But how can an Islamic government be established? It is the "path of struggle" (Ideas start small, then grow, people gather around them, then they gain strength, and finally, they take control of affairs) (p. 119).

For this reason, he believes that the Islamic movement must unite with the masses and work tirelessly to raise their awareness, enlighten them, expose the methods of deception, the ways of draining their discontent, and the tactics of exploiting their issues. This is evident in the statement he issued on the 15th of Sawal, following the earthquake in Khorasan last year: "O all our Muslim masses in Iran, beware of the methods of the authorities, and do not allow the events of the earthquake, floods, or similar incidents to divert you from your course. Do not listen to the propaganda of the Shah, and continue your Islamic revolution until the downfall of the despotic regime that humiliates and oppresses the people. At this time, when the Shah exploits the earthquake incidents to distract the people from their cause, religious leaders must bear their heavy responsibility in enlightening the people about these vile methods. Politicians, intellectuals, and university students must fulfill their Islamic mission and not allow the authorities to divert the revolution or extinguish its flames."

When the Shah tried to introduce some superficial Islamic changes to pull the rug out from under the feet of the clerics, through the Ministry of Ja'far Sharif-Emami, Imam Khomeini exposed this approach in a statement he issued on 23rd of Ramadan, 1398, saying: “… As for the closure of gambling clubs, it is of no value and is another trick to deceive the clerics. They close the gambling clubs under the guise of respecting Islam, while all other centers of immorality remain in place! And the oppression, killing, and looting continue as normal actions of the Shah’s executioners, despite Islamic laws and the verses of the Holy Quran!”

They claim to give freedom, while the best and most noble sons of Islam and Iran are still in prisons, detention centers, and under royal torture, or living in exile!'"

Imam Khomeini succeeded with this approach, and cassette tapes and his publications became the daily bread for the Muslim masses in Iran. He focused on the word and the call for action in the role of revival, saying ten years ago: 'Today, you do not have a state or an army, but you have the ability to call to action. Your enemy has not taken away from you this ability to invite, guide, and deliver the message.' 'We must strive to lay the foundations for the legitimate Islamic state, so we call, establish ideas, issue instructions, and gain supporters and backers. There must be waves of conscious direction and coordinated guidance to the masses so that a collective reaction arises, whereby the aware Muslims, firmly holding onto their faith, will be fully prepared to shoulder the task of forming the Islamic government.' (p. 120) The Imam called for focusing on university students in the call for action because they are more open-minded than others and are the most opposed to oppression, servitude, treason, and the plundering of wealth and resources. He also called for taking advantage of the opportunities provided by Islam for meetings, which may not be easily accessible to others, such as congregational prayer, Hajj, and Friday prayers. He said, 'We must consider these gatherings as golden opportunities to serve the principles and the creed,

to clarify the beliefs, laws, and systems in public. We must benefit from the Hajj season and reap its best fruits in calling for unity and urging the implementation of Islam among all people. We must look for solutions to our problems and discover the root solutions Islam has provided for them.' (p. 125) 'O sons of Islam, be strong and firm in presenting your arguments to the people so that you may defeat your enemy with all its weapons, army, and guards. Make the truths clear to the masses, rouse them, and instill the spirit of jihad in the people of the market, the street, the workers, the peasants, and the university students... Everyone will rise up for jihad.'

These are the words of Imam Khomeini from more than ten years ago, and today we see them as a living reality in the streets of Iran. We witness the results and fruits of them in every citizen. This is a reporter from an American magazine asking an ordinary citizen why his son does not go to school, and the Muslim citizen answers: 'What school is this? Why should he go? He should be martyred in the path of his religion.' (And if the martyr Imam Sayyid Qutb called for this process of revival and understood how arduous and long it would be, declaring, 'I know the distance between the attempt at revival and assuming leadership is vast,' then Imam Khomeini envisions and anticipates this, saying: 'We do not expect our teachings and efforts to bear fruit in a short time, because establishing the foundations of the Islamic government requires a long time and tireless efforts.')

He warns the Muslim youth and the masses about the lies of colonialism and its agents, who try to implant in our minds the notion that politics is about deceit, trickery, and cunning, in order to divert us from it. Meanwhile, they manipulate the affairs of the nation as they please. He urges the Muslim youth to break free from their isolation, continue their studies, and overcome the difficulties in order to plan for the Islamic government that will be established after the removal of the unjust government, which he believes will happen after the process of calling for revival and resurrection.

1) Resist the institutions affiliated with the unjust government.
2) Stop cooperating with it.
3) To stay away from any work that benefits her.
4) Establish new judicial, financial, economic, political, and cultural institutions.

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There remains an important issue in the thinking of Imam Khomeini and the practice of the Islamic movement in Iran, which is its stance on the Palestine issue. This stance reflects a profound strategic and tactical awareness, one of significant impact and importance. It is a position that other Islamic movements should reflect upon, drawing lessons and insights not only at the theoretical level but also at the level of practice and application. This is because stagnation at the theoretical level is a maneuver that allows any crude and fluid thought to remain in its place, performing its role in an unhealthy manner.

Imam Khomeini understood the nature and role of colonialism, the modern Western challenge to Islam, and the intellectual invasion that followed. He also recognized that Israel is the real embodiment of this challenge, representing the presence of this challenge in its most extreme form. As the Islamic thinker Tawfiq al-Tayyib says: "Here, we are not facing Western culture as a stream, but we are facing it within the very Western individual. We are confronting modern Western civilization in its thought, morals, and science, and we are not facing it in the form of peaceful dialogue, but in the form of an inevitable clash... because we do not face it as a culture, but as a human mass... as an occupation, which places us before two inevitable options: land or war... and land here means history and people." The Islamic thinker Tawfiq al-Tayyib continues: "Islam as a doctrine and the Arabs as a people are facing their destiny... and the test is Palestine." This is precisely what Imam Khomeini understood and what Professor Abul A'la Maududi in Pakistan also understood when he declared that the Palestine issue must be the focal point of the Islamic movement.

Thus, the relationship between the Islamic movement in Iran and Palestine was born—a relationship whose depths cannot be fully explored in a book of this nature. However, we might point out some of its aspects. The Islamic movement consistently accused the Shah of being a traitor to Israel and of supporting it. Imam Khomeini says in his book *Islamic Government*: "The Shah's regime... buys Phantom aircrafts to be used for training by the Israelis. And since Israel is at war with the Muslims, anyone who aids or supports Israel is, in turn, at war with the Muslims" (p. 114). While some members of the Islamic movement were being trained in Palestinian revolutionary camps and cooperation between the two sides was developing, Imam Khomeini declared his support for armed struggle and issued a fatwa declaring the necessity of working to dismantle the Zionist entity, in his historical fatwa in which he stated:

"The element of corruption is that the Islamic states and all Muslims must work to remove Israel and not fall short in supporting the revolutionaries. It is permissible for them to spend zakat and other forms of charity on this decisive matter.” When colonialism and isolationists in Lebanon attempted to eliminate the Palestinian revolution, Imam Khomeini issued a call exposing the dimensions of the conspiracy and emphasized the need to provide support for the resistance. During the October (Ramadan) War of 1973, he issued two statements urging the Islamic peoples and states to support the Arab peoples in confronting the Zionist enemy. He called on the leaders of Islamic countries to be wary of the Zionist corruption embedded in the heart of Islamic lands and to cut off oil supplies to countries supporting Israel's brutal aggression against their Arab and Muslim brethren. Imam Khomeini also urged the Iranian Muslim people not to remain neutral and called on them to strike American and Israeli interests.

In a message addressed to Yasser Arafat on the 16th of Shawwal, he said: "We have always disagreed with the Shah on his policies and positions regarding the Palestinian cause, just as we fight Israel and its supporters... and we stand with you in your revolution against them."

Imam Khomeini accused Israel of participating in the suppression of the Islamic Revolution in Iran. In a statement issued on 15 Shawwal 1398, he said, “Those who harvested the women of Islam and followers of the Holy Quran with machine gun bullets, and as is well known, sought help from the Israeli commandos in killing the brave, unarmed masses.”

Here is a glimpse of the thought of Imam Khomeini and the Islamic movement in Iran. In the next chapter, we will discuss the Islamic organization itself. However, I would like to point out before leaving this chapter that the Islamic Revolution in Iran is, in its essence, an Islamic revolution, meaning it is not a revolution of one sect against another. The broad Quranic perspective highlights the commonalities between the Sunni and Shia branches of Islam, which indeed form the body of this revolution, starting from its principles, goals, means, and motivations. The disagreement between Sunnis and Shiites regarding the Imamate of the Twelve Imams and the infallibility of the Imams does not, either negatively or positively, affect the nature or course of the revolution.

However, in order to complete the objectivity of this research, we must conduct a brief study of the foundations of Shia thought.

Chapter Three

The Origins of Shiite Thought

Shiism is one of the oldest and largest Islamic sects, and it has branched into many subgroups, possibly exceeding a hundred. However, the sect that officially and accurately represents Shiism is the Imami sect. This last sect has taken a critical, rejecting, and often excommunicating stance toward many of the other sects. Imam Muhammad Hussein Al-Kashif al-Ghita, the Twelver Shia Imam, describes the Khatibiyya in his book *The Origins of Shiism and Its Principles* as heretics, outside the fold of Islam (p. 129). These are the ones who went astray and claimed the divinity of Ja'far al-Sadiq (may God be exalted beyond what they claim). Al-Kashif al-Ghita also speaks of another sect, the Sayyida, saying, "All the books of the Shia declare a curse upon (Abdullah ibn Saba, the founder of the sect) and disassociate from him," adding, "He is too vile to be mentioned." Abdullah ibn Saba claimed that Ali was a prophet, and then went further to claim that Ali was a god.

The Imamate is the sect we refer to when talking about the Shi'a. They are those who supported Imam Ali, may God be pleased with him, in particular, and declared his imamate and caliphate based on text and appointment (meaning that God commanded the Prophet, peace be upon him, to appoint him as the Imam, and that the noble Prophet recommended it). They believed that Ali and his eleven descendants were more deserving of the caliphate than anyone else, and that they were the best of creation after the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. They also believed that the imamate could not be passed outside of his descendants, and if it were, it would be wrong due to either external influence or taqiya (precautionary dissimulation). Shi’a thinkers assert that the first person to plant the seed of Shi’ism within Islam was none other than the founder of the Islamic Shari’a himself, as mentioned by Al-Kashif al-Ghita. Professor Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr states in his book *Shi’ism and Islam* (Dar al-Zahra, p. 49) that "the Shi'a were born immediately after the death of the Prophet, peace be upon him, embodied by those who practically submitted to the leadership of Imam Ali, may God be pleased with him, a leadership that the Prophet, peace be upon him, commanded to be implemented immediately after his death. The Shi’a direction was clearly manifested from the very first moment in rejecting the path that the Saqifah (the gathering of the companions) took, which sought to freeze the proposition of the leadership of Imam Ali and to assign the authority elsewhere."

Some of the sincere companions, who were devoted in their love for the Imam and considered him more deserving of the caliphate, are seen as the beginning of the emergence of Shi'ism. Among them were Sulaiman al-Farsi, Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, Miqdad ibn Aswad, and Ammar ibn Yasir. This discussion about the Imamate completely applies to the Twelver Shi'a sect, although there are other factions within the Shi'a who differ in varying degrees:

1. The Kaysaniyya: Named after Kaysan, the freed slave of Imam Ali. It is said that they claimed Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah was the Imam al-Mahdi, the awaited leader who would fill the earth with justice as it had been filled with oppression. This sect has since disappeared.

2. The Afṭahiyya: They believed in the imamate of Abdullah ibn Ja'far al-Sadiq, not Musa al-Kadhim as the Twelver Shi'a claimed, nor Ismail as the Ismailis

claimed, since they were his brothers. It is said that they were named after their leader, Abdullah ibn Fathih, possibly because Abdullah had a flat (afṭah) head. Abdullah died without leaving a male heir. This group has since disappeared.

3. The Waqifa: They believed in the imamate of Musa al-Kadhim and that there would be no imam after him, as he is alive and does not die, and will fill the earth with justice as it had been filled with oppression. This group has also disappeared.

4. The Nawasiyya: They believed in the imamate of Ja'far al-Sadiq and that he is alive and has not died. This group has also disappeared.

5. The Ismailis: They believed in the imamate of Ismail ibn Ja'far instead of his brother Musa al-Kadhim. They argue that after Ismail, the imams were hidden, as an imam may conceal himself if he lacks the power and strength to openly confront his enemies, instead allowing his callers to emerge. These imams continued to pass the imamate from one to another in secrecy until Abdullah al-Mahdi, the head of the Fatimid state, revealed the call when he felt powerful enough. They are called the "Batinis" because they believe in a hidden, inner imam, asserting that for every outward appearance there is an inner truth, and for every revealed text, there is an interpretation. Some among them even believed in the concept of divine incarnation, claiming the imam was created from the light of God or that God's light had incarnated in him. A sect of Ismailis still exists in India today.

6. The Zaidis: They follow Zayd ibn Ali ibn Hussein ibn Ali. They are considered closer to the Sunni Muslims than other sects, as they do not practice taqiya (dissimulation), and they acknowledge the caliphate of Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman based on the welfare of the Muslim community and to avoid division. They regard Ali as the best of creation after the Prophet, peace be upon him, due to his closeness and his precedence in Islam. They allow the appointment of someone less qualified to the position of imam if the chosen person is experienced, permitting the imamate of someone less qualified in the presence of a more qualified candidate. They do not claim the infallibility of the imams, nor do they believe in their occultation. They do not permit the imamate of anyone outside the descendants of Fatimah (such as Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah).

   This sect still exists, particularly in the mountains of Yemen.

7. The Twelver Shi'a: They are the largest Islamic sect after the Sunni Muslims and are primarily concentrated in Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan. They believe in the imamate of Ali and his eleven descendants (as previously mentioned) based on explicit text and recommendation. However, the Sunnis do not believe that the Prophet Muhammad, peace be

upon him, explicitly appointed Ali for the caliphate. If there had been such an explicit text, as they claim, the Ansar and the Muhajirun would have accepted it and pledged allegiance to him. Some Shi'a believe that the companions (may Allah be pleased with them) remained silent on this issue for political reasons, thereby opposing the Prophet's guidance. However, Al-Kashif al-Ghita, in his book *Asl al-Shi'a wa Usuluha* (p. 113), disavows this opinion, stating, "No, far be it from them (referring to the noble companions); they were the best of people on earth at that time. Perhaps not all of them heard the words, and those who did hear some of them did not pay attention to the intended meaning. The noble companions of the Prophet are too exalted for such baseless doubts." Furthermore, on page 117, he states that civil and religious authority was unified in the early caliphs and did not separate until the caliphate of Muawiya and Yazid. The Twelver Shi'a believe that Imam Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, is the first of the twelve imams, and Muhammad al-Mahdi, who went into occultation around 260 AH, is the last. He will return at the end of time to fill the earth with justice after it has been filled with oppression and tyranny.

The philosophy of the Imamate in Twelver Shi'ism is based on four fundamental principles:

1. **Infallibility (Ismah):** This means that the twelve imams are infallible and free from any mistakes or errors. They assert this belief, and Imam al-Kulaini in his book *Al-Kafi* narrates from Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, saying, "Do not hold back from speaking the truth or offering just advice, for I am not immune from making mistakes." There is also the stance of Hussein, who opposed his brother Hasan's peace agreement with Muawiya, saying, "If my nose were to be cut off, it would be more beloved to me than what my brother did." Professor Ahmed Amin, in his book *Duha al-Islam* (Volume 3, p. 222), states: "If Ali had all this infallibility and knowledge of the hidden matters, history would have changed, and he would not have accepted arbitration or arranged the wars in the way he did. If it is said that he knew and remained silent and acted according to destiny, then he was subject to circumstances just as people are, and the events of time affect him as they do others. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, 'If I knew the unseen, I would have increased the good and no harm would have touched me.'"

2. **The Mahdi:** In both language and religion, the term refers to the man whom God has guided, so he is guided. Among the Twelver Shi'a, it refers to the "*awaited imam,"* who is still in occultation among the people and will reappear to fill the earth with justice as it was previously filled with oppression and tyranny. This Mahdi is Muhammad al-Mahdi, who went into occultation around 260 AH. Many Shi'a believe that the Islamic state cannot be established again without the appearance of the Mahdi. However, as seen in the previous chapter, Imam Ayatollah Khomeini

took the position that waiting passively for the Mahdi without taking action to establish an Islamic government is worse than abrogating Islam itself. The Zaidi sect, on the other hand, denies the concept of the Mahdi as presented by the Twelver Shi'a.

3. **Al-Raj'a (The Return):** This refers to the belief that God will return a group of the dead to life in this world. They believe that the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, as well as Ali, Hasan, Husayn, and the other imams, along with some of their opponents among the companions, such as Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Muawiya, will return to the world after the appearance of the Mahdi. Those who wronged the imams, usurped their rights, or killed them will be punished. However, Imam Al-Kashif al-Ghita, in his book *Asl al-Shi'a wa Usuluha* (p. 99), states: "Belief in the return (raj'a) is not necessarily a requirement for being considered a Shi'a, nor is denying it harmful. While it is a necessary belief for some, it is not fundamental to Shi'ism in terms of existence or non-existence."

4. **Taqiya**: In their belief, *taqiya* refers to concealing the truth and keeping one's beliefs secret from opponents, avoiding openly supporting them in ways that may lead to harm in both religion and worldly matters. It is narrated from Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq that he said, "He who has no taqiya has no religion." They permit taqiya in matters of religion when there is fear for one's life, and it may also be allowed in situations of fear for one's wealth or for the sake of public interest.

   Imam Ayatollah Khomeini, in his book *Islamic Government* (p. 142), says: "Taqiya should not be used in every small or large matter. It was legislated to protect oneself or others from harm in the context of rulings. However, if Islam itself is in danger, there is no room for taqiya or silence." The Shi'a consider the silence of Abu Bakr and Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) as taqiya, as well as Hasan's stance toward Muawiya.

These, in brief, are the four principles upon which Twelver Shi'ism is based.

The question we face now is: What is the position of the Shiites regarding the people of any Muslim who does not follow the imamate and denies the concept of infallibility in the Sunnah?

Although Imam al-Kulayni says in his book *Al-Kafi*: “A servant is not a believer until he knows God, His Messenger, all the Imams, and the Imam of his time, and returns to him and submits to him,” some interpret the phrase “not a believer” to mean that he is not a Shiite Muslim. Imam Muhammad al-Husayn al-Kashif al-Ghita answers this question decisively in his book *Asl al-Shi'ah wa Usulaha* by saying: “Islam and Iman (faith) are synonymous and are used in a broader sense based on three pillars: Tawhid (the oneness

of God), Prophethood, and the Hereafter. If a person denies one of these, they are neither a Muslim nor a believer. There is a fourth pillar, which is acting upon the principles upon which Islam is built, and they are five: prayer, fasting, almsgiving (zakat), pilgrimage (hajj), and jihad (struggle). The testimony of faith (shahada) falls under Tawhid. These four pillars are the foundations of Islam and faith in the more specific sense according to the majority of Muslims. However, the Twelver Shiites added a fifth pillar, which is belief in the Imamate (leadership by divinely appointed Imams)" (p. 127). Imam al-Kashif al-Ghita considered that not adhering to the fifth principle, while maintaining faith and following the four pillars, does not exclude a Muslim from the bounds of Islam and faith. He says (in the same source): "...if one adheres only to those four pillars, they are a Muslim and a believer in the broader sense, and all Islamic rulings apply to them, including the sanctity of their blood, wealth, honor, and the obligation to protect them, as well as the prohibition of their gossiping. They are not, by failing to believe in the Imamate, excluded from being a Muslim—God forbid. Yes, the effects of religious devotion to the Imamate will show in the higher ranks and honors on the Day of Judgment, but in this world, all Muslims are equal, and some are equal to others."

In summary, the Twelver Shi'ah, who make up the majority of the Shi'ah today, believe that there is no god but Allah, that He is One and Unique, and that nothing is like Him. They believe that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the Messenger of Allah, who came with the truth from Him and is the most truthful of all messengers. They believe in all of Allah's prophets and messengers, and in everything that was revealed to them from their Lord. They also believe in the Imamate of Ali and his eleven descendants, considering them more deserving of the Imamate than anyone else, and that they are the best of creation after the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). Their belief in the Imamate does not imply disbelief or corruption, as the Imamate of a specific person is not considered one of the fundamental pillars of Islam, according to the Sunni view.

Although they affirm the Imamate of the Twelve Imams, those who deny these Imams are not considered disbelievers or outside of Islam, and all Islamic rulings apply to them. They also believe in the infallibility of the Twelve Imams and the return of the Mahdi, who is currently alive among the people. Whether they are right or wrong in this belief, it does not lead to disbelief or apostasy. One of the main criticisms against them is their accusation against the noble Companions of the Prophet. However, some of them disassociate themselves from the extremists and say that respecting the companions of our Prophet is part of respecting the Prophet himself, and thus, they honor them because of their respect for him. Meanwhile, others claim that Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman (may Allah be pleased with them) usurped the authority from Imam Ali (may Allah be pleased with him). Still, others argue that Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman exerted their judgment but made mistakes.

This is the doctrine of the Twelver Shi'ah. It is important to note, at the end of presenting its fundamentals, the fatwa issued by the Grand Imam Sheikh Mahmoud Shaltout when he was the head of Al-Azhar, which was published in 1959 in the journal *Risalat al-Islam*, issue number 3 of the 11th year, page 227.

“The Ja'fari school of thought, known as the Twelver Shi'ah, is a doctrine that is legally permissible for worship, just like the other schools of thought within Ahl al-Sunnah. Muslims should be aware of this and free themselves from unjust partisanship toward any particular school.”

Chapter Four

Iran: From the 1906 Revolution to the 1978 Revolution

To many observers, it seems that what is happening in Iran now is a replay of what occurred in the early part of this century, when the Qajar ruling family at that time faced a critical situation in response to the demands of the Muslims, who stood against the tyranny of the Qajar Shah, Muzaffar al-Din Shah, and his recklessness and submission to the occupying colonial powers. At that time, Russia and Britain were exerting actual influence and control over Iran.

The history of the Qajar dynasty in power dates back to its founder, Agha Mohammad Shah Qajar, who assumed the throne in 1796, and ends in 1925, when its last king, Ahmad Shah, was deposed by Reza Shah, the founder of the Pahlavi dynasty.

During the rule of the Qajar dynasty, significant changes occurred that had a far-reaching impact on the history of Iran. Iran lost some of its territories around the Caspian Sea in two wars with Tsarist Russia. The rule was dictatorial and oppressive, where prisoners were sent to jail for an undetermined period, not knowing why they were imprisoned or why they were released.

Corruption and bribery filled every government department, and tax collectors took pleasure in punishing defaulters, flogging them while they were tied to trees. In addition to the deteriorating economic conditions, the country imported several times more than it exported. Bakery owners mixed bread with sawdust and rice husks, to the extent that hundreds of citizens died as a result. The majority of the population were illiterate, and the government did nothing to improve the situation. In fact, Naser al-Din Shah (1848–1896) restricted travel to Europe for education, and he is famously quoted as saying, "I would like my people’s children to be so ignorant that they do not even know whether Brussels is the name of a city or a type of vegetable!"

This Naser al-Din Shah is the one who had numerous encounters with the revolutionary leader Jamal al-Din al-Afghani. He was killed by one of Jamal al-Din's followers, who, when he stabbed him, said: "Take this from the hand of Jamal al-Din."

Signs of dissatisfaction with the rule began to surface gradually until, in 1906, during the reign of Muzaffar al-Din Shah, it transformed into a popular revolution led by the Muslim scholars in Iran. They declared a sit-in at the mosques, demanded the expulsion of the governor of Tehran, the prime minister, and some officials, as well as the Belgian customs manager, who had dressed as a religious man at a costume party. Although Shah Muzaffar al-Din sent the Caucasian Russian troops, who spread fear and panic, the Islamic revolution continued to escalate, forcing the Shah to sign the Constitutional Law. The first article of the constitution stipulated that the official religion of the state is Islam according to the Ja'fari sect, and that the head of state must be from this sect. The second article granted scholars the right to discuss and reject any law that did not align with Islamic Sharia. The eighth article granted full legal equality to Iranians, and the ninth article ensured the protection of citizens' lives and property. The tenth article prohibited the arrest of any person without a written order, and safeguarded their postal and telegraphic communications. The constitution, with its annex, consisted of 156 articles, and Articles 22 and 23 dealt with censorship.

A constitutional democratic government was formed in place of the authoritarian government, and another council of senators was elected, consisting of 60 members, half of whom were appointed and the other half elected.

During the outbreak of the Islamic revolution in Iran, the revolutionary leader Jamal al-Din al-Afghani sent a message to the leaders of the revolution. We would like to quote most of its text as it was published in the magazine *Al-Manar*, which was issued by Muhammad Rashid Rida, due to the importance of this message:

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

“The bearers of the Qur’an and the guardians of faith, the supporters of the firm religion and the champions of the manifest law, the precious soldiers of Allah in the world and His overwhelming proofs... the nations of misguidance, His Eminence Hajj Mirza Muhammad Hasan Shirazi, and the rest of this nation and the representatives of the Imams from the great rabbis and honorable scholars, may Allah glorify Islam and Muslims through them and humiliate the arrogant heretics... Ameen.”

“For as long as the European nations have longed to seize Iranian lands, driven by their desires and their malice, they have been deceived by their ambitions, which allowed them to infiltrate its territories and lay the groundwork for their rule, taking advantage of the ignorance of its people in order to avoid direct confrontation that could lead to disastrous consequences. This has stirred the spirits to revolution whenever the opportunity presented itself and during the periods of upheaval. However, they realized that achieving their goals while the scholars held power was impossible, because the hearts of the people inclined towards them entirely, and everyone was at their command, obeying as they were directed, moving whenever they were told to, with no resistance to their decisions or rulings. They continued to strive to protect the Islamic domain, never allowing themselves to be negligent or deceived, nor swayed by desire. They remained vigilant, waiting for their moment, while the calamities of time and events drew closer.”

“When this tyrannical Shah ascended the throne, he began gradually stripping the scholars of their rights, diminishing their status, and reducing the influence of their words, driven by a love for absolute power and the false authority of his commands and prohibitions. He was keen on expanding the scope of his oppression and injustice. He expelled a group of people from the country in disgrace, clearing the way for himself, so he could oppress the people, destroy the lands, and indulge in all forms of atrocities. He openly flaunted various immoral acts and squandered his time in base desires and animalistic pleasures, draining the blood of the poor and the needy by day, and extracting the tears of widows and orphans by force (Oh, for Islam!).”

“When his madness intensified in all its forms, he appointed a vile minister, one who had no religion to restrain him, no intellect to admonish him, and no sense of honor to prevent him.”

“The Europeans thought that the time had come to seize Iranian territories without struggle or combat. They claimed that the scholars, who had once defended the sanctity of Islam, had lost their strength and influence. As a result, every opportunist rushed in, eager to grab a piece of that kingdom. Truth was defeated, and falsehood prevailed, but their efforts were in vain, and every stubborn tyrant was humbled. I speak the truth when I say, O leaders, that you have honored Islam with your determination, raised its word high, and filled hearts with awe and respect. The foreigners knew that you had an invincible authority, an unyielding power, and an unchallengeable voice. You were the shield of the country, and in your hands lay the fate of the people. However, the situation has now grown more dire, and the disaster has deepened, for the devils have united with force to break the resistance and, with the aim of reaching their goal, have conspired to incite that wicked apostate to expel all the scholars from the country. They made it clear to him that the execution of orders could only be done through the obedience of the military commanders, and that the commanders would not disobey the scholars' commands nor would they allow harm to come to them. Therefore, to ensure the stability of the government, they must replace the scholars with foreign commanders. The Shah, in his complete madness, approved of this and was overjoyed by the idea.”

“By God, madness and heresy have allied themselves, and cursedness and greed have pledged to destroy religion, diminish Sharia, and hand over the land of Islam to foreigners without any confrontation or adventure.”

“O guides of the nation, if you had neglected this humiliated Pharaoh and himself and had given him time on his bed of madness and had not hastened to remove him from the throne of his misguidance, the matter would have been decided, and treatment would have become difficult and remedy impossible.”

“You are the supporters of God on earth, and your souls have been purified by divine legitimacy from worldly desires that cause discord and call for hypocrisy. Satan has despaired, by the shells of truth, of dividing your word. You are all one hand with which God defends the fortified fasts of His religion and repels with its overwhelming strength the soldiers of polytheism and the helpers of heresy. All people (except for those whom God has decreed to be disappointed and lost) are at your command. If you were to announce the removal of this tyrant, the prince and the lowly would obey you, and the rich and the poor would submit to your rule, especially since the chests have become embarrassed and the hearts have been torn apart by this harsh and feverish sultanate that has not quelled aversion, nor recruited soldiers, nor built countries, nor spread knowledge, nor honored Islam, nor brought comfort to the hearts of mankind for a single day. Rather, it has destroyed, wasted, fallen short, and humiliated.”

“When the removal takes place, there is no doubt that the one who succeeds this tyrant will not be able to deviate from your divine commands. He will have no choice but to submit at the threshold of the Muhammadan Sharia. How could it be otherwise, when he clearly sees the divine power you possess, with which you can overturn tyrants from their thrones? When the common people are blessed with justice under the rule of Sharia,

they grow more devoted to you, they become enamored, and they gather around you, becoming all of them soldiers of God and defenders of His scholars. It is a misconception to think that the removal of this tyrant can only occur through military assaults and artillery fire. This is not the case, for the belief in your cause has taken root in the minds and hearts of the people, and it is that to oppose the scholars is to oppose God. Therefore, when you, O bearers of the Qur'an, announce God's judgment on this usurper and bring forth His command, the people will rise, and they will abandon him, and the removal will occur without dispute or bloodshed."

"Chests are heavy and hearts are torn from this cruel, feverish sultanate that has not quelled aversion, nor recruited soldiers, nor built countries, nor spread knowledge, nor honored Islam, nor brought comfort to the hearts of mankind for a single day. Rather, it has destroyed, wasted, fallen short, and humiliated."

"You, O scholars, and those who supported the religion with you, are in great danger from now on. You have broken the horn of Pharaoh with the stick of truth and cut off the nose of the heathen with the sword of the law. He is waiting for opportunities to help him take revenge, to heal his anger and to please his nature, which was created with hatred and obstinacy. So do not give him a few days and do not allow him to take hold of the reins. Announce his removal before his wound heals."

"Far be it from you, you who are firmly grounded in knowledge, to doubt the removal of a man whose authority was usurped, whose actions were immoral, and whose orders were wicked, and who, after he had sucked the blood of the Muslims, devoured the bones of the poor, and left the people naked and barefoot, owning nothing, his madness ruled that foreigners should rule over a country that was a source of pride for Islam and a safeguard for the firm religion, and the storm of foolishness led him to exalt the word of disbelief and to seek shelter under the banner of polytheism."

This is the text of the historical document that Jamal al-Din sent to the Muslim scholars, which will become more significant when we realize that after the death of Shah Muzaffar al-Din, who remained a constitutional symbol contrary to what Jamal al-Din had hoped, and when Shah Mohammad Ali came to power, the Iranians were not yet able to breathe the air of constitutional freedom. The new shah began to weave the threads of a conspiracy to return the country to the previous despotic rule. On June 23, 1908, the Russian Caucasian division, led by Russian Colonel Lya Khof, surrounded the National Assembly and bombarded it with artillery, damaging it and wounding some of the deputies while others fled. The Muslim guards defended it with rare bravery. Thus, the shah suspended the constitution, dissolved the National Assembly, and established a military government in Tehran, imposing a curfew on the city.

This lesson, which Jamal al-Din pointed out in his important document, was understood by the Islamic movement in Iran under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini, who announced the Islamic Revolution in 1978.

The army is not guilty, the Iranian army is not guilty, the Rastakhiz party is not guilty. The only guilty party is the palace that controls everyone. This is where the insistence on the slogan "Marg bar Shah" (Death to the Shah) comes from.

However, after Muhammad Ali Shah's tyranny, the Muslim scholars did not accept defeat, and a revolution broke out across Iran. Despite the support of the Russians for the Shah, the mediation of the British, and the acts of genocide and repression against the Muslim masses, the revolutionaries advanced from the north and south and besieged the capital. On July 16, 1909, the government's forces surrendered, and the Shah fled to the Russian embassy. The revolutionaries announced the deposition of the Shah and the appointment of his son, Shah Ahmad Mirza, as king, and they reinstated the constitution. When the communist revolution took place in Russia and the Soviet Union became preoccupied with its internal problems, Britain seized the opportunity to strengthen its influence over all of Iran. The Soviets, sensing the danger of British control, attempted to create new leaders supporting them within Iran. Through one of the government's opponents, named Mirza Koochak Khan, the Soviets managed to establish a separatist socialist government in some Iranian provinces. Britain strongly urged the central government in Tehran to fight against this separatist government, sending a strong campaign led by Colonel (Reza Khan), the father of the Shah, who was able to achieve a swift and decisive victory over the separatists. The Russian forces supporting the separatists then withdrew, and the Soviet-Iranian treaty was signed in February 1921, which is still in effect today, allowing the Soviets to send troops to Iran in the event of an armed attack from any foreign power, with the condition that these troops would withdraw once the danger had passed.

Colonel Reza, the founder of the Pahlavi royal family, had joined the Iranian army as a soldier and quickly achieved impressive promotions. At the age of 22, he joined the Caucasian Division led by Russian officers, where he gained significant experience and expertise that later helped him achieve his swift and decisive victory over the separatists. This victory gave him immense popularity, which eventually led him to become the prime minister under the reign of Ahmad Shah Qajar, the last king of the Qajar dynasty. Reza Khan strengthened his position from behind the throne with support from the Iranian army and police until he was able to eliminate the weak monarchy and declare himself, with the approval of the National Assembly, the new king of Iran. On April 25, 1926, he was formally crowned in a grand ceremony, following the tradition of past Iranian kings. Upon assuming power, Reza Khan focused on establishing a strong military, equipped with the latest weapons imported from France. He increased the military budget fivefold, raised the number of troops from 40,000 to 112,000, attracted officers to the court by offering them generous pensions, sold them state-owned land at nominal prices, and placed them in high positions.

There was mutual admiration between Reza Khan and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, evident in the warm reception that Atatürk gave Reza Khan during his visit to Turkey in June 1934. This admiration had been apparent from the beginning when Reza Khan proposed a modern Persian state in contrast to Islam, attempting to elevate Persia while distancing it from Islamic identity. He sought to reduce the role of religion in the lives of

the Iranian Muslim people by establishing legislation based on civil law, drawing from French legal systems rather than Islamic Sharia. He passed a law that allowed for the nationalization of land and irrigation projects owned by religious institutions, limited religious schools, and began having government representatives monitor these schools to enforce the separation of religious teaching and military service. The government also created special agencies to manage mosques and religious sites, and to regulate the pilgrimage to Mecca. Furthermore, the Shah took control of religious endowments and decided how they should be spent. During his reign, a gendarme was made to climb onto rooftops and blow a horn at prayer times instead of the traditional call to prayer (adhan). Two policemen were stationed at the entrance of every mosque, under the pretext of maintaining order and preventing congestion when people left. One Iranian cleric recounts in his memoirs that "the servants of the Holy Shrine of Mashhad, most or all of them, wore turbans before the Pahlavi dynasty took over. But when Reza took power, he forced them to wear the Pahlavi cap and Western-style clothing, with only a few exceptions."

In addition to all of this, he launched a campaign under the name of "women's liberation." In 1930, he began by removing and banning the hijab, starting with his own family. In 1935, the Shah issued a decree prohibiting girls and female teachers from wearing the hijab or entering their schools while wearing it. He also banned any military officers from appearing in public places or streets accompanied by a veiled woman, regardless of her relationship or kinship with them.

The Shah continued to rule Iran in this manner until World War II broke out. He sided with Germany, rejecting the requests of the British and Soviets to expel the Germans from his country. This led to British and Soviet forces entering Tehran on September 17, 1941. The Shah was then forced to abdicate the throne in favor of his son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, and he left Iran, eventually settling in Johannesburg, where he died on June 25, 1944. His remains were later transferred for burial in the Rifa'i Mosque in Cairo. Prior to this, he had arranged the marriage of his son, Mohammad Reza, to Princess Fawzia, the sister of King Farouk.

In 1941, Mohammad Reza took power on September 16, at the age of 21. He had received his primary education at the military school in Tehran, and his secondary education at the "Chally" School in Switzerland. He then joined the Officers' College in Tehran, and in May 1938, he was promoted to the rank of Second Lieutenant in artillery and joined the Iranian Army as an inspector.

Iran lived through a period of instability and chaos from the time the Shah took power until Mohammad Mossadegh took office, under the shadow of widespread political corruption. During this period, especially after the end of World War II, the United States emerged as a major power, with a group of countries aligning with it. The U.S. saw Iran as an important field for political competition, given its abundant oil resources, its proximity to the Eastern bloc, its anticipated role in leading the Islamic world, and the potential to create a military force that could support the Western world in the region. This will be discussed in more detail when studying the U.S. position on the crisis.

Shortly after the U.S. entered the scene, the issue of nationalizing oil, which had been under British monopolies, arose. Dr. Mossadegh, the leader of the National Front and head of the oil committee in the parliament, believed that the best course of action for the state was to nationalize the oil industry. The Prime Minister at the time, Ali Razmara, opposed this move, even though Mossadegh had the support of the Shiite leader Ayatollah Kashani. As a result, the public staged violent protests and demonstrations against the Prime Minister. On March 7, 1951, a young Muslim named Khalil Tohmasbi, who was a member of the "Fadaiyan-e-Islam" group led by NavvabSafavi, managed to assassinate Ali Razmara in the Shah Mosque in Tehran. On that day, NavvabSafavi issued a statement declaring that the hero who killed Razmara, the "traitor," had fulfilled his duty.

The Islamic leader Ayatollah Kashani supported this action, as previously mentioned in Chapter Two.

The crisis continued until Dr. Mossadegh became Prime Minister on April 26, 1950, and Iran entered a new phase in its history with an open confrontation against British colonialism. Just four days after forming his government, Dr. Mossadegh announced the nationalization of Iran's oil and expelled the British. He then attempted to take control of the military, firing 130 senior officers, and formed committees to investigate corruption among the elites. He made the Shah's authority purely symbolic, which forced the Shah to flee the country on August 16, 1953. However, he returned after six days when the CIA orchestrated a military coup against Mossadegh, led by General Fazlollah Zahedi, who was later appointed Prime Minister to lead a brutal regime that supported the Shah's rule.

Mossadegh was arrested and sentenced to three years in prison. After that, the Muslim fedayi (Khalil Tohmasebi) and the Iranian leader (NavvabSafavi) were arrested and executed.

Before transitioning to study the nature of the new Shah's regime, we would like to point out that despite the democratic freedoms gained by the people during the period of the national government, the national movement did not address the problem fundamentally. The Islamic movement, which should have played a central role in the process of change as the sole representative of the authenticity of the Muslim masses and their grassroots, did not take its expected place. The national movement remained devoid of any revolutionary Islamic content, merely embodying bourgeois ambitions that did not analyze the problem in depth. This allowed opportunists and professional politicians to rally around Mossadegh. Although Mossadegh had appointed himself as Minister of War, he was unable to infiltrate the military, which remained tasked with the historical mission of restoring the Shah to power, just as his father had done in 1925.

Chapter Five

The Shah's Regime (Study and Analysis)

When Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi returned to power once again after the coup led by General Fazlollah Zahedi, orchestrated by the American intelligence, he tried with all his might to control the situation. The years from 1953 to 1960 were years of consolidating the regime and suppressing the national and Islamic movements. In his new policies, the Shah relied on two important elements: the army and the **SAVAK** (the secret police):

1. **The Army:** The Pahlavi royal family belongs to a military lineage. The grandfather of the last Shah, and the grandfather of Reza Khan, was an officer in the Iranian army who besieged the city of Herat during the reign of Shah Fath Ali Shah, the second Qajar king. He was killed in this battle.

   His grandfather, Abbas Ali Pawand Pahlavi, held the rank of lieutenant, and his uncle, Nasrullah Khan, held the rank of major. As for his father, Reza Khan, he joined the army at the age of 13 as a recruit and quickly rose to the rank of sergeant. He continued his service until he became a colonel. Through the army, Reza Khan became the first king of the Pahlavi dynasty. When he came to power, Reza Khan, as a military man, recognized the importance of the army. He personally worked on organizing and strengthening it, doubling its size and arming it with the latest weapons imported from Paris. He also brought officers closer to the court, lavishing them with money. When Shah Mohammad Reza came to power through the army, he understood the historical tasks that the army could carry out, tasks that had helped bring his father to power in 1925 and protect his plans and projects. By 1953, the army was effectively carrying out these tasks under the leadership of Zahedi. Thus, the Shah followed his father's path in reinforcing the army as a crucial foundation for the regime. He once again doubled the army's size, which grew to between 300,000 and 500,000 soldiers (including active and reserve personnel). He brought over 15,000 American experts and additional Israeli experts. It was expected that by 1980, the number of American experts would reach 50,000. Most of the American aid after Mossadegh’s fall, which amounted to approximately $950 million between 1954 and 1960, went to the military.

   The Shah established a base in Bandar Abbas with $200 million and another in Shah Behar with $600 million. He also secured naval facilities in the Indian Ocean islands and intervened alongside Sultan Qaboos against the Dhofar rebels. One of the goals of this intervention was to train the Iranian army in combat. Up until 1978, Iran ranked fourth in the world in terms of military spending, following the Soviet Union, the United States, and France, and preceding Britain. Military expenditure soared dramatically, from $144 million in 1965 to $500 million in 1968, to $2 billion in 1973, and finally to $10 billion in 1976. It was also reported that the military spending in the 1978/79 budget was several times this amount.

These figures do not include spending on SAVAK.

The Iranian army, which ranges from 300,000 to 500,000 soldiers as mentioned, is organized into 3 armored divisions and 4 infantry divisions (along with 4 independent divisions: 2 infantry, 1 airborne, and 1 special forces unit). This army possesses 4,000 tanks, approximately 1,500 artillery pieces, and 650 anti-aircraft guns. The Iranian navy, with 25,000 soldiers, owns 3 missile-armed destroyers, 4 frigates, and 29 other naval vessels. Among the naval weaponry contracted by the Shah's Iran are four large destroyers, 14 warships, in addition to long-range aircraft and a number of submarines, particularly from West Germany. As for the air force, it possesses 100,000 soldiers and is equipped with 177 Phantom aircraft, 125 F-5 bombers, and 15 F-14 aircraft. The Iranian Air Force also includes 72 large transport planes, 71 light aircraft, and 151 helicopters. In addition, there is the Air Command attached to the army, which is separate from the air force, and it owns 61 aircraft and 247 helicopters. It has contracted for an additional 329 helicopters. To further clarify the scale of Iranian armament, we can refer to a statement by U.S. Democratic Congressman Les Aspen in February 1977, stating that 40% of all munitions ordered by 60 countries from the United States were allocated to Iran alone. He also noted that Iran's ammunition expenditure per soldier was significantly higher than that of the United States.

But why all this focus on the military? Is it for the purpose of occupying the Gulf? This goal does not require all this buildup. Or is it to establish a powerful Sassanian-style empire in the region? Or is it to create a massive institution that is independent of any class or group that might support him, such that no class or group can express itself except through the Shah himself? And could the military be a counter to the wrath of the masses, from whom the Shah has become increasingly disconnected?

2. SAVAK:

The second foundation upon which the regime is built is the "State Security Organization" (SAVAK), which was established by General Bakhtiar (not the Prime Minister) under the supervision of the CIA, with assistance from Mossad (the Israeli intelligence agency, as reported by the *Herald Tribune* on July 14, 1978). The existence of this organization gave exceptional importance to the Ministry of the Interior, and the number of its employees is around 100,000, with other estimates putting the number closer to half a million.

The SAVAK's share of the 1976 budget increased to more than one billion dollars. The SAVAK infiltrated everything in an almost mythical manner, being present in the army, political parties, among students, and even clergy. Imam Khomeini said about the clerics who supported the regime: "... some of them have been given turbans by the security and intelligence agencies..." (*Islamic Government,* p. 143).

The authorities force many factories to employ some members of the SAVAK to facilitate their infiltration among the workers. The SAVAK also runs a police network that is taken seriously abroad, where Iranian students are present. Perhaps for this reason, we used to see Iranian students protesting against the Shah abroad, even recently, wearing masks to conceal their faces.

As a result of the work of this organization, thousands of detainees are held in prisons, with the lowest estimates reaching ten thousand and some sources citing up to 300,000 detainees. Regardless of the exact number, Iran is considered one of the most brutal and savage countries in the world in terms of its treatment of prisoners. Due to the presence of SAVAK, Tehran became the primary headquarters for the U.S. intelligence agency, as confirmed by Victor Marchetti, a former CIA official, in a press conference held in London on September 5, 1974. He announced that the CIA had moved its headquarters from Athens to Tehran due to Iran's significance and the change in the Greek regime.

Recent events prompted the Shah of Iran to dismiss the head of SAVAK, General Nematollah Nassiri, possibly to quell the anger of the masses or because Nassiri had not anticipated the unrest, particularly the one that began in Qom, and failed to suppress it before it escalated. He was replaced by General Nasser Moghaddam, the head of military intelligence.

The Islamic Revolution accuses the SAVAK of being behind the fire that broke out inside the "Rex" Cinema in Abadan Square on August 20, 1978, which resulted in 430 deaths. The SAVAK attempted to deflect the attack through counter-tactics. Iranian students in Paris issued a statement saying: "This heinous crime has far-reaching implications, committed by the Shah's regime, which exactly follows the methods of the Nazi regime," referring to the fire Hitler started at the German Reichstag, a major fire for which he later accused his opponents, leading to their swift liquidation. Mr. Sadeq Qotb Radeh, one of the media officials in the Islamic movement, recounted the details of the incident to the *Al-Nahar Al-Arabi Wal-Dawli* newspaper as follows: "The police arrived and surrounded the cinema an hour before the incident, pretending there were destructive elements inside the hall. Cinema guards say the police took the keys from them and asked them to go

home. Half an hour after the police arrived, six people left the cinema, and the police did not stop them. A few minutes later, the police cleared the area and disappeared. The fire broke out, and no one could escape. Our information suggests that the death toll rose to 700." He adds, "First, the police station in Abadan is 200 meters from the cinema, so why didn't the police rush to the scene, especially since they could clearly see the fire? The police chief in Abadan, General Razmi, had been a colonel in the religious city of Qom six months prior. There, he committed his first crime and was later promoted to general and transferred to Abadan. The fires in the cinema were not caused by a regular bomb. Incendiary bombs were placed inside the hall, and only police and military personnel have such bombs in Iran. In Abadan, the most important fire departments are present because it houses oil refineries, and the fire department is located just one kilometer from the cinema. So, why did the fire trucks only arrive three hours later, and the first truck that arrived was empty of water?"

This is one of the fruits of SAVAK, the second pillar upon which the Shah relied after the army. We may understand that a collapsing regime would try to defend itself... the horrific bloodshed! But to this extent and in this manner?

2

Shah Mohammad Reza once wrote: "My father was admiring of Persia's glorious past, keen on preserving what did not conflict with progress from our inherited traditions. However, he was firmly convinced that the independence of the land, the sovereignty of the nation, and the well-being of the people could only be achieved through the immediate adoption of the West."

This is how Reza Khan thought, and this is how the Shah continued in a broader way, while the masses maintained and adhered to their Islamic ideology. This created a contradiction with the Shah's liberal system. At a time when liberal regimes were collapsing in the region after losing their justification for existence, the stage was left open for military coups, which were, in most cases, another attempt by colonial powers to maintain their presence and continuity. During this time, the Shah attempted to save his liberal system from collapse by instigating a revolution from within the system or a revolution from above. He announced the White Revolution. On May 19, 1961, he addressed the Iranian people, marking the first spark of his revolution, and asked the parliament in 1963 to grant him exceptional powers so he could implement his revolutionary program or reforms. It is notable that most military regimes also sought exceptional powers. He chose Dr. Ali Amini, a former finance minister under Mossadegh and his cousin, to work with him as prime minister, a man who was known for his clear political cunning. On January 26, the Shah managed to gain the support of the parliament (which was considered fake according to some) for his revolution, and he announced the abolition of feudalism, the ratification of land reform laws, the securing of all forests and

pastures in the country, the inclusion of workers in profit-sharing, amendments to the electoral law that gave women the right to vote, and the creation of compulsory education battalions and justice houses in the regions (known as the "Houses of Justice").

On October 6, 1967, he announced the continuation of the White Revolution by issuing three new principles:

1. Nationalization of surface and groundwater resources in Iran.
2. Rebuilding all government facilities and institutions in a way that aligns with the spirit of the times.
3. Revolution in administration and education.

While he began his White Revolution, he also developed a massive and ambitious industrialization plan, all aimed at making Iran the secular Persian power, the third force in the world, or the new Japan. In continuation of his program, he suspended the constitutional article that stipulated the monitoring of the constitution and laws by Islamic scholars, preventing the passage of any law that contradicted Islamic Sharia. At the same time, while funds from Islamic endowments were being allocated to mosques and educational institutions, he confiscated these endowments under the pretext of land reform.

Before we examine the reality and outcomes of this revolution, it is important to note that Imam Khomeini rejected the Shah's steps, driven by his belief that the Iranian regime, which was fundamentally linked to and dependent on colonial powers, based all its actions on their directives. He (Imam Khomeini) was not against reform, but he opposed surrendering land to brokers, collaborators, and Baha'is. He was against American domination, against dictatorship, terrorism, and starvation, and against the destruction of the economic strength and Islamic prestige of the scholars.

From the very beginning, the Shah's flawed conception of revolution and development becomes apparent. Entering the era of industrialization and the world of power cannot be achieved merely by desire, money, or media; it cannot be achieved simply by having some objective conditions. Revolution is a process of comprehensive change that requires a special political and psychological climate to convince the masses to sacrifice temporary solutions and mobilize them for a long-term struggle. Iran, as a Third World country, does not have colonies to plunder or pay for technology. The required mobilization cannot be separate from the ideology of the masses... and it cannot be separate from Islam. In other words, a true revolution in the Islamic world cannot be disconnected from Islam in any way.

On one hand, the Iranian regime relied on the inflated Western technology brought by the companies that entered the country, aiming to achieve a high rate of development at an extremely fast pace. However, this reliance on global capitalist companies turned the Iranian economy into a mere marginal extension of the capitalist market, subject to its fluctuations, while at the same time being unable to confront global monopolies. On the other hand, there was an emphasis on making huge investments in a handful of major

industrial projects that employed high levels of technology, without working on developing other industries in a balanced manner. Now, what do economists say about the Iranian economy? British economist (Fred Holiday), author of the book *Global Imperialism,* says: "When analyzing the Iranian economy, the outlook appears undoubtedly bleak. We do not mean to predict what will happen, but at the very least, we will make talking about 'new doors' and catching up with Europe just meaningless talk."

A report from the American Institute (Houston) in early 1977 states: "Even if these goals are achieved during the last ten years of the current century, Iran will remain nothing more than an unfinished industrial structure. It will be adorned with the trappings of power and international influence, without any real substance, either in terms of authority or strength."

The annual bulletin of the Middle East, published by the research department of *The Economist magazine in 1977,* states:

"Not everything is as it seems at first glance economically. Behind the widespread prosperity of recent years, during which Iran recorded one of the highest production rates in the world (due to the increase in oil revenues following 1973), there are fundamental flaws in the economic structure with implications for the medium and long term. Recent figures indicate that the growth of Gross National Product has practically stalled. The fact that Iran is operating with a budget deficit of slightly over $2 billion for the fiscal year (1976-1977) and plans to borrow at least $1 billion from abroad is not by itself a matter of great concern. However, what worries planners in Iran is that the gap between foreign exchange earnings and payments is rapidly closing. Authorities are also concerned about the amount of private capital leaving the country. The surplus in the balance of payments for the year ending March 20, 1975, was $5 billion, but one year later there was a total deficit of about $1 billion. This deficit is expected to grow during the current year. In fact, if current payments continue at the same rate they reached in 1975-1976, a current account deficit of as much as $3.5 billion could occur."

We can add to all of this:

1. The expansion of consumption, especially luxury consumption, has led to a 77% increase in the volume of imported goods, according to official statistics from the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. By 1976, the value of imports had reached $6.7 billion. This increase in imports and rising prices contributed to inflation, which reached 20% in recent years. This inflation has cost the Iranian people dearly, particularly as it exacerbated the vast disparities in living standards between the rich and the poor.

2. In the agricultural sector, which supports 53% of the population, the White Revolution achieved nothing but a catastrophic economic failure. Traditional agriculture was neglected, and this neglect led to the system's inability to integrate agriculture into its capitalist growth process. As a result, Iran, once self-sufficient in food, was forced to

import 60% of its food consumption. Unemployment spread in rural areas, affecting one and a half million families that received no share of land in the agrarian reform program. Moreover, agricultural production has grown at a rate of only 2%, which is lower than the population growth rate.

3. In the industrial sector, there was a clear weakness in the industries, and the quantitative increase in industrial production could not compete with imported goods due to their low quality. The group of Iranian industrialists remained tied to advanced industrial and financial centers, and despite their relative strength, this group was unable to break free from the grip of giant multinational monopoly companies.

4. On the social side: We observe a worsening of the vast disparities in living standards and a distortion in income distribution. The Shah, in an interview with *Time* magazine, wondered, "There must be something wrong. How can the per capita income rise from $160 a year to $2,300, and the result is this rejection?" He ignored the fact that this income increase is a theoretical figure that only represents the rise in the state's income, not a real increase in the purchasing power of the people. He also overlooked that 10% of the population owns 40% of the national income, and the average income for individuals in rural areas does not exceed $200 per year.

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Thus, as 1977 was drawing to a close, the Shah's regime found itself facing multiple internal problems:

1. **Failed development programs:** These were hindered by their ties to global monopolies on one hand, and by being announced without ideological mobilization of the masses on the other. Without such mobilization, the success of the programs became almost impossible, especially in developing third-world countries. The sharpness of this failure was somewhat mitigated by the massive oil revenues.

2. **The problem of waste and extravagance:** This reduced the regime’s ability to invest, with the peak of this waste being seen in excessive spending on the military, SAVAK (the secret police), and palace celebrations. Everyone still remembers the extravagant celebration marking the 2,500th anniversary of the Persian Empire, where luxurious food was brought to guests from the *Maxim* restaurant in Paris, all set in a mythical atmosphere created by the Shah around himself. Waste was also evident in the massive transfers of money abroad for the benefit of foreign companies and the ruling class, including princes, princesses, and high-ranking officers. It was reported that they had smuggled out

$2.4 billion, and it is enough to note that a single general from the former military government managed to escape with $17 million.

3. **The issue of minorities:** The Baluchi, Arab, and Kurdish minorities posed a problem. These minorities would only unify and integrate through the Islamic doctrine, which Imam Khomeini advocated, not through the "Persianization" policies promoted by the Shah. In other words, minorities remained a constant threat as long as the "Persianization" policy was in place. The Shah was also fearful of a repeat of the Bangladesh scenario.

4. The final internal issue facing the Shah's regime was the crisis of democracy. The Shah believed that democracy and free debate over national issues were matters that Iran could not afford at that time. He said in 1969: “Finally, my frustration reached a point where I decided to abandon democracy and rule through decrees.” When he established the Rastakhiz Party, the only criterion for membership was loyalty to the constitution, the monarchy, and the White Revolution. According to the Shah, outside the Rastakhiz Party, there was no room for political neutrality. Those who did not support the party had two choices: either imprisonment or permanent exile. SAVAK (the secret police) translated these concepts in its own way, through horrific and bloody practices, which alienated the Iranian people across all political directions and social classes.

Chapter Six

Opposition and Minorities

While Marxism views the party as an expression of the interests of a specific class, and organizational entities always arise from the activities of specific social groups, the reality in Iran shatters this theory and mocks all the claims and explanations of Marxists. The Iranian Communist Party itself is nothing more than a gathering of bourgeois intellectuals, whereas it is supposed to represent the workers and the oppressed—who, in reality, are fully aligned with the Islamic movement. This movement is led by religious leaders whom *Baradja* newspaper previously attacked, accusing them of causing unrest due to their opposition to the Shah's land reform policies, which they claimed hurt the interests of the high-ranking clergy. The Islamic movement encompasses the majority of the Iranian masses, united on the basis of class and social affiliation. This includes workers, peasants, students, university professors, and technicians, as well as the poor, the rich, and the middle class—who all gather under the banner of an Islamic ideology that expresses their culture, heritage, and interests simultaneously. When discussing the opposition and its factions, we must consider that even organizations outside the Islamic movement are unable to operate within the country without gaining the trust and approval of the religious leadership.

1. **The Islamic Movement:**

   The Shia masses owe their loyalty to a number of religious leaders and scholars known as *mujtahids*. A *mujtahid* is considered a religious authority, and such an authority is referred to as a *marja' taqlid* (religious reference). This scholar receives an "ijaza" (license) from a higher-ranking *mujtahid* to teach religion, issue legal rulings (fatwas), and compose religious texts (*risala*). There are about ten prominent *marja's* in the Islamic world, including Shari'ah Allah Modarresi, Ayatollah Khomeini, Sayyid Abu al-Qasim al-Khoei, Shihab al-Din al-Najafi al-Marashi, Gulpaigani, Muhammad al-Shirazi (who resides in Kuwait), and Muhammad al-Khunsari, among others.

   However, the supreme leadership is divided between Ayatollah Khomeini, to whom most Shia Muslims in Iran, Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan turn for guidance, and Sayyid Abu al-Qasim al-Khoei, the highest religious authority in Iraq. The influence of a religious authority is often based not only on their vast knowledge of religion but also on their stance on issues that concern the majority of the people. Thus, the prominence of Ayatollah Kashani, the highest religious authority during the Mosaddegh movement, was not just due to his vast knowledge but also due to his political stances. Similarly, the popularity of Imam Khomeini stemmed from his bold support of the 1963 revolution, his opposition to the Shah, and his leadership of Islamic political organizations both inside and outside Iran.

   While Najaf al-Ashraf in Iraq is largely compared to the Vatican, the religious authority (marja') is comparable to a cardinal. Each marja' is surrounded by a *housa 'ilmiyya* (religious seminary), and the most prominent seminaries in Iran are located in Qom, followed by those in Khorasan, Tehran, Isfahan, Yazd, and Tabriz. Islamic sciences are taught in these seminaries, which rely on *ijtihad* (independent scholarly reasoning) to address all issues related to Islamic legislation. The

number of people affiliated with the six mentioned seminaries is approximately 160,000 clerics. Once a student completes their studies at these seminaries, they are expected to choose one of three directions:

1. **Preacher (Khatib):** Known as a *manbar* preacher, named after Imam Hussein ibn Ali. This preacher addresses a political topic during a speech lasting one or two hours (on Fridays).

2. **Mosque Imam:** This role involves not only leading the prayers and performing religious rituals but also giving lessons. The mosque imam is responsible for the village or area in which they reside, engaging with the people both religiously and secularly, and managing their affairs.

3. **Teacher (Mudarris):** The teacher continues their scholarly development until they receive a license from a senior *mujtahid* to teach religion and prepare a *risala* (religious text), after which they become a *marja* (religious authority).

The followers of these three directions are deeply embedded among the masses, influencing their lives in a way that surpasses the government's influence. They provide economic aid through *unIslamic* banks that they establish, help young people get married and furnish homes, as well as collect *khums* (a religious tax), which, along with the income from religious endowments (*awqaf*), serves as a source of funding. The highest religious authority in Qom had contacts with the Shah himself during the period of Imam Hassan Tabatabai Borujerdi's leadership. It was said that the Shah would secretly visit the Imam in his residence in Qom, and no one knew what transpired between them, although it was known that the Imam had three envoys who communicated with the Shah: Sheikh Falsafi, Sheikh Ahmad, and Imam Khomeini. The Shah always tried to reduce the power of the clergy. Despite the blow dealt to them by confiscating their large landholdings and attempting to redistribute them to middle-class landowners, aiming to create a new class to undermine the clergy's influence, this new class remained a loyal ally to the religious leaders under the cover of the Islamic ideology that filled the hearts and realities of the Muslims in Iran. Among the Iranian Islamic movement, several militant organizations emerged, including the *Fada'iyan-e Islam* organization. Bernard Lewis, in his book *The West and the Middle East,* describes them as holding a concept of Islamic unity that closely resembles the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood. This organization was led by a devout, enthusiastic young man named Navvab Safavi, who was 29 years old. The group attempted to join the Palestinian war, with its members donning shrouds and preparing to march there, but the ceasefire signed by the Arabs and Jews stopped them.

The Fada'iyan-e Islam resisted British influence and stood by Mosaddegh during the oil crisis. They killed the Iranian Prime Minister, Razmara, who opposed the nationalization of oil.

A Egyptian journalist described *Fada'iyan-e Islam* in 1951 as the largest terrorist organization in the East. Navab Safavi raised the slogan "No sectarianism among

Muslims," meaning no division between Shia and Sunni, and he argued that there was no contradiction between Islam and nationalism. In an interview with *Al-Muslimeen* magazine, Navvab Safavi said: "Let us work united for Islam and forget everything except our jihad for the glory of Islam. Is it not time for Muslims to understand and abandon the division into Shia and Sunni? Let them all look into the Book of their Lord, which is sufficient to unite them, so that they may become a strong, unified front against their enemies. The pains and sacrifices they endure for their common goal will have a profound effect on all hearts."

Navvab Safavi remained a strong opponent of the Shah until he was shot dead on January 18, 1956.

In the early 1960s, another organization emerged that also used violence against the regime: the *Palestine Organization*. The choice of this name reflects both the distance between Jerusalem and Tehran, as well as the close ties between the Shah and Israel. This name indicates the awareness of the Islamic movement in Iran regarding the danger posed by Israel as a colonial state representing the crusader and Jewish challenge to Islam in this century. The regime's secret police, SAVAK, pursued this organization with violence and ferocity. It is believed that the regime succeeded in eliminating this Islamic organization, which had played a significant role and had a wide influence within the student movement. Another Islamic group, *Jama'at-e Islami*, also began its armed activities following the events in which one of its members, Mohammad Bokhara'i, assassinated former Prime Minister Hassan Ali Mansour in 1963.

Similarly, the *People's Mujahedin Organization* (*Mujahideen-e Khalq*) emerged based on a revolutionary Islamic ideology, with leaders such as Hanif Boukhari, Ahmad Rezai, Mehdi Rezai, and Saeed Mohsen, all of whom were executed by the Shah. A statement published by Iranian revolutionary clerics in Beirut on September 10, 1978, explained that the organization abandoned its Islamic ideology after the execution of its leaders in favor of Marxist thought. This shift led to a decline in popular support for the organization, as noted in the statement. The organization then carried out physical eliminations of several leaders who refused to abandon the Islamic ideology, such as Hamid Labaf and Majid Sharif Aqfi. They also revealed to the authorities the identity of Imam Talafani, who supported the organization.

2. **The National Front:**

   The National Front was founded by Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh in 1950 when he was the head of the oil committee in the National Assembly. The front adopted parliamentary and peaceful methods of struggle to reach power. Indeed, Dr. Mossadegh, who was elected to parliament, formed a national government, the only one elected during the Shah's reign, in April 1951. This government raised the slogan of nationalizing oil, and Mossadegh waged the battle for nationalization against international monopolies, expelling the British in 1952. He purged the army, reduced the length of military service, and set up committees to investigate the

embezzlements of senior officers, among other reforms. He also sought to make the Shah a purely ceremonial constitutional monarch. However, Mossadegh ultimately found himself in a position of turmoil and chaos, and even the Tudeh Communist Party withdrew its support, attacking him for arrogance and extremism, accusing him of not knowing his head from his feet, as the party put it. Amid these circumstances, General Zahedi carried out his famous coup. Thus, Mossadegh was ousted, arrested, and tried after Zahedi crushed the National Front, which subsequently disbanded. The National Front was revived by Mossadegh's supporters. On July 21, 1960, lawyer Hassan Nazih announced its return before 1,000 people gathered at the home of the religious leader Firozabadi. In 1962, the front, known as the Second National Front, declared its new charter, calling for the restoration of the constitutional system, non-interference by the Shah in governance, the dissolution of SAVAK, and the guarantee of public and individual freedoms. However, the front disbanded once again, and the Iran Liberation Movement split from it. The Mossadeghists then announced the formation of the Third National Front, which remained secret until it declared itself publicly in August 1978, after the government of Jafar Sharif-Emami allowed political parties to return. The front was led by Karim Sanjabi, who, upon his return, proposed a compromise solution to the crisis: limiting the Shah's powers within a constitutional monarchy. However, after being threatened by Khomeini with expulsion from the opposition movement and following a dialogue with Khomeini in Paris in November 1978, Sanjabi became more radical, adopting Khomeini's slogans. Sanjabi was arrested on November 21 but was later released.

3. **The Left:**

   a) **Tudeh Party (Communist Party of Iran):**

      The Tudeh Party was established in 1941, following the flight of Reza Shah from Iran in October and during the stationing of Soviet forces in northern Iran during World War II. The party formed a Central Committee of 15 members, with Soleiman Marza Eskandari serving as its General Secretary. The Soviet forces adopted the Tudeh Party and embraced its leaders, allowing the party to operate publicly in the northern part of the country and secretly in other regions. The social conditions in the north contributed to the growth of the party, as the presence of large agricultural estates helped spread the party's principles. Additionally, the corruption of the central administration and the disillusionment of political leaders among the people further facilitated the party's influence. On the other hand, the Tudeh Party declared itself a socialist party that was not affiliated with communism or any country that adopted a communist or socialist ideology. The party was able to attract many bourgeois elements and operated under a highly organized structure.

      Ja'far Bishvari was able to lead the Tudeh Party in the north and changed its name to the Azerbaijani Democratic Party. In December 1954, Bishvari expelled the Shah's appointed governor of Azerbaijan and established a local

council belonging to his party. He also formed a government under his leadership, which was protected by Soviet forces, preventing the advancing central forces at the time from dismantling it. When Ahmad Qavam al-Saltaneh became Prime Minister in February 1946, he expressed a willingness to negotiate with the Soviets and included Tudeh Party members as ministers in his cabinet. Some were sent abroad to present the case of their country against Soviet intervention. This caused a rift within the Tudeh Party and made it appear, in the eyes of the Iranian people, as a Soviet collaborator. On December 15, 1945, Iranian central forces carried out a swift operation to overthrow the separatists, and their leaders fled to the Soviet Union. The Tudeh Party remained strong until 1954, but the differences with Mossadegh and the blows dealt to it by the Shah after his return to power—through continuous persecution by SAVAK—greatly weakened it. Despite always declaring itself as a party of workers and peasants, the Tudeh Party failed to establish a broad popular base and remained marginalized among the various social classes, with most of its members being bourgeois intellectuals. The Tudeh Party opposed the popular movement because of its Islamic leadership and the slogans it raised, but in the end, they found no option but to align with the revolution to avoid being seen as enemies of the people. The Islamic movement accused the Tudeh Party of being agents of the Soviet Union and betraying the national cause, refusing to cooperate with it.

b) Other Leftist Movements:

In addition to the Tudeh Party, there was a Maoist faction that split from the Tudeh Party in 1965, known as "Touqant" or "The Storm." There was also the Socialist League, which was established during Mossadegh's rule in 1952.

Additionally, there were smaller organizations with varying ideologies, including the "Jazbi" group, which was formed in the 1960s. In 1969, this group merged with another Marxist faction led by Ahmad Zadeh, and together they announced their union into a single organization called the "Fedayee of the People," which advocated for armed struggle as the only means to overthrow the Iranian regime.

4. Other Nationalist Parties:

There is another group of parties whose loyalties are divided between the National Front and the Islamic movement. Among these parties are the Iran Liberation Party, led by Dr. Mehdi Bazargan, as well as the Iran Party and the Iranian People's Socialist Party.

A. Minorities:

Despite the spotlight on Iran throughout the past year, these minorities have remained outside of the public eye, and this neglect may have been intentional. These minorities work with great cunning and secrecy, including:

1. **The Baha'is:**

   The Baha'i faith originally stems from a sect founded by Muhammad Ali Bab, a religious figure who claimed to be the twelfth Imam (the Mahdi) and the mirror through which God manifests. He was summoned by Shah Nasser al-Din, who asked him to prove his claims. After Bab failed to convince the scholars in a special council held for him, Nasser al-Din ordered his execution. Despite their claims of advocating for the unity of all mankind and the reconciliation of the three Abrahamic faiths, in reality, the Baha'is have a particular affinity for Judaism, and Israel is considered a holy place for their followers. The largest Baha'i community is in Iran, more than any other country.

Their opponents claim that there are no more than five thousand, while their supporters assert that the number is one hundred thousand. It is rumored that Amir Abbas Hoveyda belongs to them, as well as some members of the royal family.

On November 14, 1978, a delegation from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is in France presented a statement to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, expressing the assembly's concern regarding the ongoing events in Iran, which they feared could threaten the lives and property of Baha'i believers — as stated in the declaration.

B. Christians:

Their number is estimated at half a million (according to *Al-Ma'rifah al-Tunisiya,* Issue 10, Year 4), and they are among the wealthiest individuals who hold important positions in Iran.

C. Jews:

Their population is said to be several hundred thousand (according to *Al-Ma'rifah al-Tunisiya,* Issue 10, Year 4), and they are considered one of the wealthiest classes in Iranian society.

Chapter Seven

International Position

Iran holds special significance in global politics for all international parties. This importance stems from factors that make any internal development in the country always accompanied by its external repercussions.

1. **Iranian Oil:** Iran is considered the fourth largest oil producer, after the Soviet Union, the United States, and Saudi Arabia. Most of this production is exported to the United States, Japan, Western Europe, Israel, and South Africa. Iran is also the second-largest producer of natural gas, after the Soviet Union. It is expected that by 1985, the value of its natural gas production will equal that of its oil production. Interestingly, the Soviet Union buys a cubic meter of gas for one dollar and sells it for sixteen dollars!

2. Iran is located in the backyard of the Soviet Union, with its border extending approximately 1,200 miles. This factor is crucial in Western policy aimed at isolating the Soviet Union and preventing its southward expansion. It is also where the possibility arose of creating a military force in Iran to protect Western interests in the region and to counter the communist threat. In addition, the southern republics of the Soviet Union are closely linked to Iran by various ties.

3. Iran has significant borders along the Arabian Gulf, exceeding one thousand kilometers, enabling it to supervise and control this vital oil route to the West, Japan, South Africa, and Israel.

4. Iran's location in the middle of the Islamic Asian belt gives it an important role in leading this region and influencing its countries. As such, Iran is situated in a strategically sensitive global area, which typically falls under a unique pattern of international relations and balance of power. Since it falls within the vital interests and national security frameworks of the major global powers, these countries are always cautious but eager to make both direct and indirect gains. Therefore, any breach of international agreements can pose a threat not only to the security of major powers but to the fate of the entire world. This is why the global game is characterized by careful strategy and mutual understanding, as we will see when examining the position of each global power in detail.

There is one final point before explaining the positions of the major powers: this strategic importance, whether for Iran or any other similar country, makes politicians in these countries feel as though they have limited freedom in making political decisions that conflict with the interests of these powers. These officials are also fully aware of the potential risks these decisions pose to their political future. Now, let us examine the international position in detail.

1. **The United States of America:**

To understand the American role in Iran, we must first understand the broader framework of global objectives within which American interests lie. The primary objective is to maintain general stability on the global stage in a way that ultimately serves the

colonial interests of the United States. From the American perspective, the danger lies in instability, which generates tension and disputes, both internal and external. This can lead to radical attempts at change, ultimately creating a fertile ground for communist activity or any actions hostile to the United States. This objective leads directly to the second goal: the containment of Soviet expansion. The Soviet Union and its supporters represent a competing and significant center of global power that may sometimes threaten the ambitions of the United States. The call for stability in the American way always means that the United States oversees the process of defusing tensions and resolving contradictions, thus solving the mechanical equation.

"Sacrificing a friend in order to thwart an incoming enemy" — what always matters to them is preserving the essence of the system, regardless of its final form. It is not important for the friend to remain in power; what matters is that the loyalty of the system remains within objective conditions that the United States continuously monitors. With the surveillance of American intelligence agencies over many regimes in the region, it has become clear to anyone informed today. Does this mean that the United States took a negative stance toward the Shah, and if so, when and why?

Before answering, it is important to recall the nature of Iran's role and its significance for the United States. A report published about a year ago by the International Relations Committee of the U.S. Congress highlighted the importance of U.S.-Iranian interests. In addition to Iran being a strategic regional base, which, along with Israel, forms the first line of defense for Western interests, it is well-known that the headquarters of the CIA was moved to Tehran. Iran is also a key player in U.S. military plans, a participant in the Central Treaty Organization, and bound by bilateral agreements covering all military, economic, technological, and energy sectors. Furthermore, Iran is an important market for American exports, occupying the top position in Iranian markets and accounting for 20% of Iran's imports, excluding weapons. It is expected that U.S. sales to Iran during the period from 1975 to 1980 will total around 52.2 billion dollars. This closeness increased in the early 1970s for several reasons:

1. America's conviction, after its defeat in Southeast Asia, of the necessity for a local power to perform the same role as the United States.

2. The significance of the October War: The importance of Iran's second partner in the first line of defense for Western interests diminished, especially since Israel's presence in a hostile environment reduced its ability to act and might even lead to the collapse of pro-Western regimes!

3. The growing Soviet role in the Indian Ocean and its proximity to the Red Sea, while the United States seeks to play this role alone.

4. The Shah's fear of a repeat of the Bangladesh experience, especially since there are similarities between the Pakistani and Iranian structures.

5. The increase in oil revenues, making Iran a strong strategic ally that participates in improving the U.S. balance of payments.

The American writer Michael Klare summarizes the strategy towards Iran with the following three main points:

1. Transforming Iran into a major regional power capable of facing any threat to the current status quo and stability in the Gulf, thus ensuring U.S. control over oil sources, entry points, and routes, and maintaining its dominance in the region through military force.

2. Enhancing the capabilities of the Iranian government to enable it to maintain internal security and strengthening American relations with the Iranian military.

3. Considering political stability in Iran as a foundational element for the entire Gulf region.

This idea is reinforced by a report from the U.S. Congress, which states:

“The United States has a direct interest in a politically stable Iran that can be defended. This nation still stands as a barrier against the spirit of adventure, and a strong and stable Iran would be an obstacle to radical factions in the Gulf.”

The first sentence of the report reminds us of the Shah's statement in *Newsweek* magazine on January 24, 1977.

"If you do not have a strong Iran capable of ensuring its own security, the security of the region (the Gulf), and, if necessary, the security of the entire surrounding area, then what do you propose to do? Are you prepared to send one million American soldiers somewhere in the region? Are you willing to have another Vietnam?"

The last sentence of the report also reminds us of the Shah's conversation with *Selzberger*, a correspondent for *Herald Tribune* in 1975: "Imagine if these barbarians (the Dhofar revolutionaries) controlled the other side of the Strait of Hormuz, and our lives would be at their mercy."

Given that American interests are so closely tied to Iran, why the rumors about a negative American stance? Why the deliberate and early remarks by President Carter against the Shah regarding the issue of human rights?

This last question can only be explained by the confirmed reports of the existence of two different directions within the U.S. administration.

The first direction: This calls for solidifying the Shah's rule personally. The wing supporting this direction is the American faction sympathetic to the Israeli line within Congress and the Department of Defense. Leading this direction is U.S. Senator Henry Jackson, who advocates not for restricting the Shah, but for strengthening his role and expanding his military capabilities. One of the books by Imam Khomeini is described as a modern version of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. We will discuss further justifications for this direction when we talk about Israel.

The Second Approach: This approach argues that stability is not necessarily tied to the shah personally, but rather to the existence of a strong government that is closer to legitimacy and capable of implementing social and economic reforms, thus containing any potential radical change. Some of the theorists of this approach view the shah as a fiercely nationalist figure who lacks the flexibility of other allies, like Saudi Arabia. He seeks to be a strong ally, playing the balance-of-power game in ways that do not always satisfy the United States. For example, he purchases large amounts of weapons from Western Europe, which is seen as irritating. During the violent protests in Tehran in 1978, *mTime* magazine reported that Britain was about to sign the largest military contract in its history: a contract to build a massive industrial complex in Isfahan for the production of munitions, costing over 750 million pounds. This, in addition to Iran’s hardline stance on rising oil prices, further strained relations. During the shah’s last visit to the United States, he asked President Carter to stop talking about human rights, which irritated the shah, and asked him to adopt a position closer to Saudi Arabia's stance—against rising oil prices. Indeed, when the OPEC conference was held in Caracas shortly after, everyone was surprised by Iran’s position, which was more moderate than expected and closely aligned with Saudi Arabia’s. After all of this, the belief emerged that the United States, which had helped the shah come to power in 1953, was now inclined to abandon him due to the changing circumstances. This, despite the risks involved in such a shift. But was the alternative the Islamic solution? God forbid. The United States, the head of hypocrisy in the world, has always been against every Islamic movement. It understands the meaning of an independent Islamic state and the danger this poses to its own interests. The United States knows the threat posed by Imam Khomeini rising to power, as evidenced by one of his letters to Lyndon Johnson in 1964:

“Let the President of the United States of America know today that he is the dirtiest person on earth according to the Iranian people.”

What America is thinking about now is how it can thwart the Islamic revolution, and whether it is appropriate to yield to the winds at this stage or not.

So, what is the alternative?!

In American calculations, there are always several possibilities and solutions to crises. There must be the arrival of a man who is more flexible with all parties, one who will continue its policies and absorb the popular resentment.

It is said that the resignation of Abbas Hoveyda was based on the advice of one of his close friends, showing a reserved stance toward what was happening in the country and preparing himself to play a decisive role in the upcoming phase. If the situation could no longer tolerate Hoveyda, then there was always Amiri, the shrewd political figure and former minister in Mossadegh's government. The U.S. still held other cards, such as Shahpour Bakhtiar, a member of the National Front known for his past opposition to the Shah; he had been arrested six times without trial. Thus, the Shah's concession to Prince Reza, in the presence of Hoveyda, Amiri, Bakhtiar, or any other alternative, remains one of the American cards. All of this was happening with the support of a military filled with experts, agents, and allies. But can America's maneuvers deceive Imam Khomeini, the Islamic movement, and the Iranian masses?

Khomeini's awareness and determination indicate that most of the cards are still in his hand.

2. The Soviet Union:

The Soviet Union is trying to penetrate the security barrier surrounding it, and it managed to do so after the Afghan coup that brought its supporters to power. It is undoubtedly eyeing Iran as a tempting and intriguing prize, despite the precautions, obstacles, and risks surrounding this desire. It then dreams of encircling Pakistan, which would allow it to disrupt the Western security cordon and threaten the security of the Gulf region, as well as oil routes in the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. It is well known that Iran has been part of Russian plans since the time of the Tsars. Tsarist Russia sought, at times through understanding and at others through pressure, to gain a southern outlet via Iran, overlooking the Arabian Gulf. Despite this ambition, there are close relations between the Shah's regime and the Soviet Union. There are 134 industrial projects in Iran being implemented with Soviet assistance, producing 90% of Iran's coal production, 90% of its steel, and 70% of its iron. Additionally, the Shah sells large quantities of gas to the Soviet Union, which buys it at two dollars per cubic meter and resells it to European countries at 16 dollars. In 1975-1976, Iran's exports to the Soviet Union amounted to 18.6% of Iran's total exports, while Iran imported $169 million worth of goods from the Soviet Union in the same year, ranking twelfth among the countries exporting to Iran. In July 1975, the two countries signed an agreement to establish the longest gas pipeline in the world, stretching 1,000 kilometers from southern Iran to the Soviet Union. In August 1977, an oil deal was signed in which the Soviet Union, for the first time in its history, purchased one million tons of crude oil from Iran in exchange for foodstuffs. The Soviet Union has always supported and maintained these relations for several reasons, including:

Minimizing China's Role in Iran, a role that *irritates* the Soviet Union.

When unrest began, the Soviets avoided taking an adversarial stance toward the Shah. In fact, *Pravda* accused the clergy of being responsible for the unrest due to their opposition to the Shah's reforms, particularly land reforms, which threatened the interests

of the powerful clergy and feudal lords. Additionally, Brezhnev sent a telegram to the Shah on October 30th, marking the Shah's birthday or Iran's National Day. The Soviets then began blaming the police repression and, at times, accused American intelligence agencies of organizing the disturbances. However, in recent times, the beginnings of a Cold War rivalry between the Soviet Union and the United States have emerged. This is evident from a statement by the CIA Director, confirming Soviet influence in the crisis, which was met by a response from *TASS* and Brezhnev himself, labeling it as a "big lie." Following this, accusations were directed at the Americans, questioning their role within the military and their involvement in a potential coup.

In short, unless the United States intervenes directly and unless the Soviet Union feels the emergence of a figure like Mengistu in Iran (which is nearly impossible), the Soviet Union is inclined to support the Shah's regime for several reasons.

1. The Soviets understand the nature of the American game and the "alternative" scenario that the U.S. has been orchestrating from time to time, especially since the Shah was able to establish a reasonable balance with a system like his. This balance would be disrupted in favor of the U.S. if the American alternative were to take power.

2. The good relationship with the system, which we have indicated through the economic agreements between the two sides, as well as their good relationship with the Shah himself. Two years ago, the Shah returned to the Soviets a Soviet pilot who had sought refuge in Iran. Furthermore, when Chinese leader Zhou Enlai visited Iran for several days during the height of the crisis, to support the Shah, the Shah sent his sister, Princess Ashraf, on a secret mission to Moscow to reassure the Soviets that the new relationship between Tehran and Beijing would not affect the good relations with Moscow, nor the mutual non-aggression treaty between the Soviet Union and Iran, established in 1921, which grants the Soviets the right to use Iranian territory in case their borders are threatened.

3. The Soviet Union's fear of the Islamic Revolution succeeding and the establishment of a strong Islamic government would exacerbate the already difficult problems Moscow faces with its southern republics—republics that are more closely tied to Iran than to the Soviet Union.

4. The Soviet Union recognizes the difficulty of the communists sharing in governance.

But that does not prevent the Soviets from adopting technical positions depending on how the situation evolves.

Israel and the Palestinians:

Shia Muslims carry an ancient grudge against the Jews, who are accused of conspiring to kill Imam Ali. Muslim and especially Shia communities inherit the story of Imam Ali's heroism during the conquest of one of the fortresses of Khaybar, using the gate as a shield in the battle against the Jews. The Muslim people of Iran lived for a long time under the burden of their relationship with Israel, developing a deep hatred for it. This animosity was so intense that it became a widely held belief within the Iranian Islamic movement, and among the public, that the soldiers who opened fire on demonstrators during Black Friday (18th September 1978) were Jewish. Imam Ayatollah Khomeini supported the armed struggle of the Palestinian people, issuing fatwas calling for the elimination of Israel and for zakat (alms) to be directed toward this cause. During the October War (Yom Kippur War), Khomeini issued two statements urging Islamic countries and peoples to support the Arab nations in their struggle against the Zionist enemy. There were also exchanged messages between Imam Khomeini and Yasser Arafat, the President of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (as previously mentioned in Chapter Two). When the Shah accused the PLO of supporting the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the Islamic opposition responded with a statement broadcast on August 17, 1978.

“The relationship between the Iranian and Palestinian peoples is a struggle against a common enemy that targets both of them together.”

"... Is the cooperation between the revolutionary movements of the Iranian and Palestinian peoples a crime or an accusation? This is a great honor and pride for these two struggling peoples." From this, it becomes clear how much Israel fears the fall of the Shah, who had a special relationship with Israel. The Shah was personally impressed by Israel's achievements, in addition to his need for its markets to export oil and import specific goods. Furthermore, both parties had a united stance regarding the unity of the Arab nation. Under the Shah, Iran granted Israel the right to land its planes at Iranian airports. In fact, French journalist "Bari Match" reported from a witness in the July 1967 issue that American warplanes, marked with the Star of David, would land at Iranian airports before flying to Israel. There are also widespread rumors in knowledgeable circles about nuclear cooperation between Israel, Iran, and South Africa. Thus, from the very beginning, we saw how the Israeli Mossad assisted SAVAK both during and after its establishment, as reported by *Herald Tribune* on 14 July 1978, as well as the rumors that Israeli soldiers, disguised in Iranian uniforms, shot at the protesters. This led *Yigal Yadin* to issue a statement denying this, claiming that Israeli soldiers did not fire on the protesters in Tehran. It was revealed that 300 Israeli experts traveled to Tehran after the country declared a state of emergency. Therefore, Israel's position, along with its supporters in the U.S. Department of Defense and Congress, such as Senator Henry Jackson, regarding the Shah, was clear. They sought to support him, as his fall and the change in the regime posed a threat to Israel, because for Israel, such a fall meant:

1. The oil cutoff: 70% of Israel's oil comes from Iran, and this would severely harm its economy, making it unable to engage in any new war.

2. Israel would lose a strong military ally, becoming isolated in the region.

In addition to the direct impact the fall of the regime would have on Israel's negotiating position in peace talks.

All of this provides an explanation for the media campaign against the Islamic revolution. The religious newspaper *Hatzofeh* states, "No matter what system succeeds the Shah, it will be nothing but the worst..." The *Jerusalem Post* said, "The overthrow of the Shah will not only affect the geopolitical and political situation of the Arabian Gulf, but also the balance of power in general." Thus, one of the key aspects of the Islamic revolution is the conflict between Khomeini and Israel.

The Arab World:

The possibility of a confrontation between Iran and the Arab states had been looming, whether during Nasser's era, the Kurdish crisis on Iraq's borders, or through other undisclosed forms. International parties took an interest in this unannounced conflict. At the annual conference of the Middle East Institute, held on October 1–2, 1971, the conference studied the factors of contradiction between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Additionally, the Rand Corporation provided a study for the CIA about the potential situation in the event of a war between Saudi Arabia and Iran over the Gulf conflict. Iran, under the Shah, began its plan by occupying the Greater and Lesser Tunb islands, as well as Abu Musa. This was an Iranian prelude to an agreement between the Shah and King Faisal regarding two disputed islands, *Far* and *Arabi*. The Shah took the first island, and the second remained with Saudi Arabia. Despite this public and private struggle, Saudi Arabia's stance on the events in Iran was not always as reserved as usual. In fact, Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz issued a statement on November 20, criticizing the Islamic Revolution and placing the blame on international communism. This explicit criticism was met with a strong response from the Islamic movement, as revolutionary clerics in Beirut issued a statement attacking Saudi Arabia. They accused Saudi Arabia and other monarchical regimes of being responsible for the existence of Israel and attributed this criticism to Saudi Arabia's fear of the spread of the Islamic Revolution to its own borders. Kuwait took a position similar to Saudi Arabia's, while Iraq expressed goodwill toward the Shah, requesting Khomeini's departure from the country. This may have been due to the Iraq-Iran agreement on personnel matters, but more importantly, it reflected Iraq's fear of the Islamic movement, particularly given the recent memory of the unrest in Karbala and Najaf in 1977. Libya, which had a traditional dispute with the Shah, announced its support for the revolution, as did Syria.

It is indeed strange that some Arab countries take this negative stance towards a revolution that declares its support for and backing of Arab causes... unless the reason for their concern is the potential spread of the Islamic revolution to their own territories.

From Blurb:

“We move according to the logic of the dawn of Islam: if we are killed, we are in paradise; if we are defeated, we are in paradise; and if we bring defeat to the enemies of Islam, we are also in paradise. For this reason, we do not fear defeat; in fact, we fear nothing. The Prophet (PBUH) was defeated in some battles, but we fight with the sword of God, and the movement will continue.”

— Ayatollah Khomeini